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Hafa Adai!

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75¢

Ogumoro gets 1-year prison term

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Former Department of Public Safety deputy commissioner Ambrosio T. Ogumoro and his counsel, Daniel Guidotti, leave the courtroom after Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman imposed a one-year prison term sentence on Ogumoro for his conviction of three felonies and six misdemeanors. Behind Ogumoro is cultural preservationist Lino Olopai.

» Ex-DPS deputy commissioner to be placed in probation for 3 years
» To perform 300 hours of community work service

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman yesterday slapped a one-year imprisonment sentence against former Department of Public Safety deputy commissioner Ambrosio T. Ogumoro for his conviction on three felonies and six misdemeanors.

See OGUMORO on Page 4

Gun control legislation moves forward

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Concerns from the House of Representatives minority bloc obstructed a move into an emergency session to deliberate on gun control legislation the Office of the Attorney General had drafted, despite the AG office airing a need for immediate action on the legislation yesterday.

Senators, hearing the trajectory of conversation in the House over the PA, instead called for an emergency hearing for 6pm last night, a little over half an hour after the House session ended with a 12 yes to eight no vote to effectively end the chances of the legislation being acted by the House for a couple of days. The House needed a two-thirds majority vote to enter into an emergency session,

See GUN on Page 4

WITH LEGALIZATION OF HANDGUNS

PSS prepared to secure campuses

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

While concerned on the latest turn of events on the handgun issue, Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan assured that they have a program to secure the schools in the CNMI.

Sablan

The U.S. District Court for the CNMI ruled Tuesday that the Commonwealth's law on handguns unconstitutional. The Legislature, in an emergency session, has also introduced a bill in order to regulate the possession of firearms.

Sablan said school campus safety has been among her concerns since becoming the PSS commissioner in 2008.

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Six of the 10 graduates of the CNMI Public School System's Alternative Education said they are ready to face their next adventure.
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The Marianas Visitors Authority and Delta Air Lines hosted a third round of travel trade FAM(iliarization) tours targeting wholesalers in the country.
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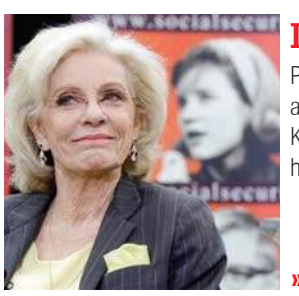

LIFE & STYLE
Patty Duke, who as a teen won an Oscar for playing Helen Keller in "The Miracle Worker," has died at the age of 69.
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Local

9th Circuit affirms prison term on Basa for sex trafficking

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has affirmed the federal court's sentence of 17.5-year imprisonment against Annette Nakatsukasa Basa for sex trafficking of children.

In an opinion penned by Circuit Judge Susan P. Graber, the appellate panel held that the enhancement under the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines for an offense that "involved the commission" of a sex act with a child, applies whether or not the defendant herself engaged in that act.

Graber said the panel held that U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona did not engage in impermissible double-counting by applying two enhancements, which applies when a defendant unduly influenced a minor to engage in prohibited sexual conduct.

Graber said the panel held the district court permissibly declined to depart downward for reduced mental capacity under the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines.

In exchange for money and drugs, Basa provided housing for two 15-year-old girls and facilitated them having sex with adult men.

Basa pleaded guilty to sex trafficking of children.

On Dec. 5, 2014, Manglona sentenced the defendant to a term of 210 months in prison.

Basa, through counsel Steven P. Pixley, appealed, asking the Ninth Circuit to reverse the 17.5-year prison sentence.

Assistant U.S. attorneys Garth R. Backe and Ross K. Naughton appeared for the U.S. government at the hearing on appeal.

At the sentencing, Basa presented evidence that she suffers from significantly reduced mental capacity because of her intellectual disability, exacerbated by post-trauma stress disorder resulting from her own history of sexual abuse.

Manglona applied sentencing enhancements. The judge also denied defendant's motion for a reduction in her sentence, reasoning that she had failed to demonstrate that her diminished capacity substantially contributed to the commission of the offense.

Pixley argues that the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines enhancement does not apply because she did not, herself, commit a sex act with either victim. Graber said this is an issue of first impression in the Ninth Circuit.

Pixley disputes Manglona's rejection of Basa's request for a downward departure on account of reduced mental capacity.

In affirming the sentence, Graber said the text of the Sentencing Guidelines is clear that it requires only that the offense as a whole "involved the commission" of a sex act; it does not specify that the defendant must have committed the sex act himself or herself.

Graber said when the specific offense characteristics require an act or status on the part of the defendant himself or herself, the Sentencing Guidelines plainly so state.

Graber said the Sentencing Guidelines also specify that, "specific offense characteristics…shall be determined on the basis of…all acts and omissions committed, aided, abetted, counseled, commanded, induced, procured, or willfully caused by the defendant."

In this case, the 9th Circuit judge said, Basa aided, abetted, counseled, commanded, induced, procured, or willfully caused the commission of a sex act with the minor victims.

Graber said Basa aided and abetted the sex acts in which the child victims engaged; she knew that her actions of encouraging, transporting, or coercing the victims would lead to sex acts and received payment for enabling the sex acts to occur.

For that reason, Graber said, defendant's offense "involved the commission" of sex acts, and that Manglona

See PRISON on Page 3

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DPW collected $1.4M in taxes, fees in 2015

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Public Works Building Safety Code division collected over $1.4 million in taxes and other fees for fiscal year 2015, according to the Office of the Governor yesterday.

A total of $1.03 million in developer's taxes were collected, with an additional $379,425.98 in building permit fees, $2,780 in special permit fees, $4,425 in demolition fees, and $40,047 in safety inspection fees amounting to over $1.4 million in revenues.

So far, fiscal year 2016 has seen over $364,000 in building permit collections and $19,000 in safety inspection revenues.

DPW Secretary James Ada said, in the statement, that the 2-percent Developers Infrastructure Tax based on a developers statement of total project's cost "has helped revenue generation as new projects in the CNMI have steadily increased."

Ada said revenue collected for fiscal year 2015 is 31.18-percent higher compared to fiscal year 2014.

Ada added revenue collected for fiscal year 2016 is 48.23-percent higher compared to fiscal year 2015.

"The division was able to increase revenues by over $900,000 since the previous fiscal years by better ensuring and enforcing compliance of the CNMI Building Safety Code to mirror the International Building Code that was adopted after 2009."

The purpose of the building code is to establish the minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, stability, sanitation, adequate light and ventilation, energy conservation and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment and provide safety to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operation.

PRISON

From Page 2

properly applied the Sentencing Guidelines.

The 9th Circuit said Manglona permissibly declined to depart downward for reduced mental capacity.

Graber said Manglona relied on several factors to reach that conclusion.

Among other things, Graber said, Manglona found that Basa's reduced mental capacity resulted in part from the voluntary use of illegal drugs.

"That finding is not clearly erroneous," she pointed out.

Graber said Basa used deliberate and intelligent methods of carrying out the offense—such as using fake names and ages for the victims—which negated the inference that diminished capacity caused her to commit the offense.

Again, Graber said, those findings are not clearly erroneous.

Graber said because Manglona came to a reasonable conclusion, supported by evidence, she permissibly denied the motion for downward departure.

In Basa's sentencing memorandum, Pixley claimed that the defendant was sexually abused by some police officers when she was young and that the abuse left her with a variety of psychological problems.

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Garapan Public Market re-opens today

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Garapan Public Market will be opening its doors once again to customers seeking fresh fruits and vegetables on Saipan today.

Seven months after Typhoon Soudelor struck the island, the CNMI Farmers Cooperative Association is now ready to operate the market.

Co-op president Crispin Deleon Guerrero is inviting the public to come and check their fresh produce that will be sold at a "reasonable price."

"We are inviting the community to come and support our farmers," Deleon Guerrero said.

The co-op is seeking the support of hotels and restaurants in buying their produce, which are all grown locally to help farmers and the economy as well.

As of yesterday, produce such as watermelon, squash, bitter melon, cherry tomatoes, and sweet potatoes are just some of the items that were already on the market's shelves.

They are anticipating more produce to be brought in by farmers until early this morning.

According to co-op secretary Sid Cabrera, they are also coordinating with farmers from Tinian and Rota to send their fresh produce to sell in Saipan.

Cabrera said the market will be open from 9am to 6pm for the soft opening. He added that they might change their schedule afterwards but they are looking at operating from 8am to 5pm on weekdays. They are also considering opening on Saturdays.

Through the Office of the Governor, the co-op was able to have a temporary manager to assist with the opening.

GUN

From Page 1

and the House would have been only able to introduce but not act on the bill in their regular session today.

The Senate met and passed the bill.

Senate President Frank Borja (Ind-Tinian) and Senate vice president Arnold Palacios (R-Saipan) and Sens. Sixto Igisomar (R-Saipan), Justo Quitugua (Ind-Saipan), Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), and Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) were present for the emergency session last night and voted unanimously.

Palacios said the Senate passed the bill including an amendment to ban guns within 500 feet of a building or vicinity owned or controlled by a non-governmental organization such as organizations that advocate against sexual, domestic, and stalking violence.

The amendment further adds to provisions the AG drafted in the bill that creates "gun free zones" in or around government buildings, schools, courts, and places of worship, among others.

Palacios said he fully understands the concerns of the community but there seem to be a misunderstanding that the lawmakers lifted the ban on handguns when it was the federal court's decision.

"This is a step in the right direction. The attorney general said he would be coming back for more legislation to further regulate firearms and ammunition in the Commonwealth" but that these are also "pending on outstanding cases" regarding gun control in other U.S. courts.

"This is the first step in protecting the public in light of the district's court position," Palacios told *Saipan Tribune* over the phone last night.

The House deliberated on the need for an "emergency" session for a couple of hours before actually calling themselves into session at around 4:30pm.

This, and the effective no-vote to enter session and allow for public comment angered some in the crowd who had waited in the House gallery for hours to comment.

A loud bang of the House chamber door turned lawmakers' head when audience stormed out of the chamber after House Speaker Ralph Demapan (R-Saipan) apologized there would be no public comment.

House minority bloc members raised concern with, among others, a need to appeal the U.S. District Court for the NMI's ruling that found the gun ban unconstitutional, a need for provisions to make guns virtually inaccessible with taxes on gun imports or on stores seeking to open firearm businesses; more time to consult with other attorneys, their counsel, and other friends on concerns with the bill, and typographical errors regarding the formatting of the bill.

"Anyone in this chamber could possess a handgun" or carry it into public spaces, like schools, Attorney General Edward Manibusan stressed yesterday. "And there is nothing that my office or I, or law enforcement can do."

On questions on appealing the case ruling, Manibusan cited the Supreme Court ruling that struck down a ban on handguns, saying the CNMI's "success on merits is probably nothing."

"Our success of appeal is almost…nothing at all," he said.

House vice speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero, who eventually voted for an emergency session, asked the AG's office why they should go into emergency session and act "immediately."

"What we face here is an emergency," chief solicitor James Zarones responded. Firearms, he said, now can be possessed anywhere in the CNMI under any condition and the police was "powerless to stop them."

"Until a new law is passed that will be true in the Commonwealth and that is true right now," he said.

"The clock is already running," he said for the Department of Public Safety as it could now or will be "flooded with applications" for gun permits.

DPS can approve a permit within 15 days after background checks and can take up to 60 days but is not authorized by law to defer applications after this time, according to Zarones.

Zarones emphasized the lifting of the ban was not just for handguns, but for rifles and shotguns.

People, he said, can possess a rifle and a semiautomatic and can take it to a school "today, if they feel that is necessary for self-defense."

"The court specifically stated any law in the Commonwealth interpreted" against firearms "can no longer be enforced," he said.

Manibusan, explaining some of the background to the case, said the case was filed in 2014 and since the case's beginning his office started putting together draft legislation.

Noting that he attended case hearings in recent months, Manibusan said, "I felt at the time the court was going to rule in favor of the plaintiff."

Zarones said that Section 2206 of the CNMI'S Weapon Controls Act has been struck down to extent that it can be intended to regulate the possession for firearms for self-defense.

The court specifically stated that any law to the contrary cannot be enforced, he said.

Still, a House counsel later argued that federal judge Manglona's ruling was "ambiguous" as 2206 was not specifically cited, though, Zarones had told lawmakers that 2206 was at the heart of the lawsuit the plaintiff had won on Monday.

Zarones said the NMI now has to replace laws to allow for possession of firearms for self-defense "but limits the location for self defense."

"We do believe they would survive any kind of challenge. Absolutely," Zarones said, when asked.

Zarones, citing the Heller case, said traditional restriction on firearms were constitutional.

The Second Amendment rights are "not unlimited," Manibusan also said, citing the Heller case.

This ruling could be sued in the NMI's favor, he said.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

PSS

From Page 1

"I'm always worried, about a lot of things, specially when it comes to school campus safety and orderliness."

Sablan added that the PSS has policies and procedures that promote safety and they hold drills—earthquake, fire, tsunami evacuation—every year based on their emergency and logistics management operations program. "We follow these procedures on things that promote safety and welfare of the kids. We must do everything to ensure the safety of our students in school."

She said that everyone should always be prepared to any possible situation with the recent District Court ruling and the bill that is pending at the Legislature on guns and gun control.

"We have to be prepared no matter what. It must be an everyday thing that we must be prepared for the safety and welfare of our children. We have to be ready, whatever it takes for us to do, we must be ready."

Bulletproof vests for cops

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, in a separate interview after yesterday's emergency session, said former senator Pete Reyes introduced a gun control bill that is currently in the Legislature when he was still the Senate president in 2014. He added that a draft bill has already been done.

Torres said stricter requirements like doing background checks and random tests would be implemented before issuing a license. "We just wanted to be prepared, now that is here. We are trying to be strict as much as we can, yet we won't deny the right to bear arms."

He added that although it would be an additional cost to the government, they are planning of providing bulletproof vests to all law enforcement agencies. "This has change the whole dynamic of our government, now we are looking at giving bulletproof vests."

"We are also after for the safety of our law enforcement personnel as we look for more collaborative efforts within our community," Torres added.

OGUMORO

From Page 1

"This court believes that a great harm to any society or community is corruption in any form and especially in the form of a breach of the public trust that is vested in an employee or as in this case a high ranking official, an acting commissioner of DPS," Wiseman said.

The 57-year-old Ogumoro remained calm when the judge announced the sentence. The courtroom was packed mostly with the defendant's family members, relatives, and friends. Four court marshals were in the courtroom.

Special prosecutor George Lloyd Hasselback, counsel for the government, told the media after the hearing that Wiseman's imposition of one-year jail term demonstrates to the public that the court is taking public corruption seriously.

"This closed the final chapter of the very sad story of the Commonwealth history," Hasselback.

Ogumoro and his counsel, Daniel Guidotti, refused to comment about the sentence.

Wiseman ordered Ogumoro to pay a $3,500 fine, $100 court costs, plus restitution and probation fee in an amount to be determined later.

After serving the prison term, the defendant will be placed on probation for three years. He was required to perform 300 hours of community work service.

Ogumoro is barred from reemployment directly or indirectly with the CNMI government for a period of 10 years.

The judge allowed Ogumoro to start serving the prison term at the Department of Corrections after two weeks.

Wiseman noted the defendant's years of public service and achievements, an outstanding career in the U.S. Marine Corps, retiring as a master sergeant.

Wiseman said he received numerous letters of support, a petition with over 1,500 signatures and statements made in court yesterday urging leniency.

Former lawmakers Juan Morgen Tenorio and Benigno Sablan and cultural preservationist Lino Olopai spoke in court, requesting for "mercy and leniency." They cited Ogumoro's numerous contributions to the community and to the country.

Wiseman said he welcomes and appreciates the many letters and petitions of support for defendant, from family and friends, many of whom he has known, admired, and respected for several decades.

Wiseman said as to the crimes of conspiracy to commit theft of services and theft of services, defendant treated the time, money, and resources of the law enforcement personnel as his own private property and dispatched the good men and women who serve the community away from their duties to protect the public with the express purpose of breaking the law.

As to the crime of misconduct in public office, Wiseman said Ogumoro's acts demonstrated a flagrant display of abuse of authority.

Wiseman said that, on Aug. 13, 2012, when the CNMI Office of the Public Auditor filed criminal charges against former Attorney General Edward T. Buckingham, Ogumoro participated in and actively interfered with the ongoing criminal process through his subordinates in DPS, and other members of the conspiracy.

Wiseman said Ogumoro carried out the unlawful desires and order of then-governor Benigno R. Fitial, now a convicted felon, with an elaborate plot to employ armed police officers to escort Buckingham to the airport in the early morning hours in order to avoid service of a penal summons.

Wiseman also noted that Ogumoro has a pending criminal case yet to go to trial for criminal charges that relate to alleged abuses of power in his capacity as deputy or acting DPS commissioner.

Wiseman said the supporters' gratitude expressed in their statements and letters for the good things defendant has done is reasonable and appropriate.

"But the requests for exceptional leniency and a few for no jail time are based on the idea that someone who does good things cannot also do bad things or that the good directly offsets the bad," he pointed out.

Wiseman said based on the convictions of the nine crimes, they represented that perhaps Ogumoro was a direct actor in a culture of ethical failure in his service, which was promoted by Fitial and his administration.

"The very definition of corruption is an official's use of its office to procure some benefit either personally or for someone else, contrary to the rights of others," he said.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

Chicken kelaguen supplier temporarily shut down

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. has temporarily closed down the establishment involved in a food poisoning incident that caused over 20 people to be brought to the hospital Monday afternoon.

According to CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muna, the source of the food poisoning was identified as Franco's Yum Yum's chicken kelaguen.

"We identified that they bought the chicken kelaguen from Franco's Yum Yum," Muna said, noting that the establishment is located in Kagman 3.

» 21 individuals brought to ER due to food poisoning

"As soon as we found the source, we closed the location and also went to the other areas to the stores [where Franco's Yum Yum delivers] and removed if there's any leftover," she added.

Muna said a total of 21 individuals were brought to the emergency room between 1pm and 11pm with most cases, or 12 individuals, brought in between 4pm and 8pm.

Three cases were deemed not severe enough. Most cases were ambulatory with some arrivals through Emergency Medical Services.

"There may be other people that were poisoned but only 21 came to the ER," Muna said.

Muna added that victims experienced acute vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain but no fever or neurological symptoms were reported. None of them also needed to be admitted to the hospital.

CHCC's report said that inadequate food handling, food preparation, and refrigeration are most likely the source of exposure.

"Right now they're denying it but we have some suspicions of it," Muna said.

She added that investigations are ongoing and that the vendor has been suspended from selling until CHCC recertifies them.

"They're basically under investigation. In order for them to be open, they need to basically be trained again. They need to understand that they really need to protect the consumers," Muna said.

CHCC is reminding food establishments to not be complacent with food handling, food preparation, and refrigeration and that it is necessary that when consumers are buying their food item, they can be confident that it is safe.

"We need to make sure that when you're buying, you as the consumer, need to trust that whatever food you buy, that it's not going to give you gastroenteritis," Muna said.

CNMI meets 2nd quarter pension obligations

The CNMI government has fulfilled its second quarter obligation to the Settlement Fund for FY '16, meeting its $10.5 million obligation for the second quarter of the fiscal year, the Office of Governor said in a statement yesterday.

The Settlement Fund received $750,000 on March 29, yesterday, and as a result the government met its $10.5 million obligation for the second quarter.

In January, the Department of Finance remitted $1 million to the Settlement Fund, $875,000 on Feb. 3, an additional $875,000 on Feb. 4, three separate installments of $1 million by February 29th and four payments of $1 million in early March with the fifth payment just on March 29.

Department of Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson said the government has once again met its obligation to the settlement fund and reiterated that the administration will continue to make the required payments.

"Maintaining the pensions of our retirees at 100 percent is a definite priority and we will continue to make payments to the Settlement Fund," she said in the statement.

The Settlement Fund annual payment agreement amounts to $30 million to be paid by Nov. 30 of this year.

So far, a total of $15 million has been remitted to the Fund. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A blessed birthday to Argine Arbolado. May your days be filled with God's love through your friends and family. Let your service to Him brings joy and fulfillment to your life. We love you! Greeting from EY family and JILSaipan family.

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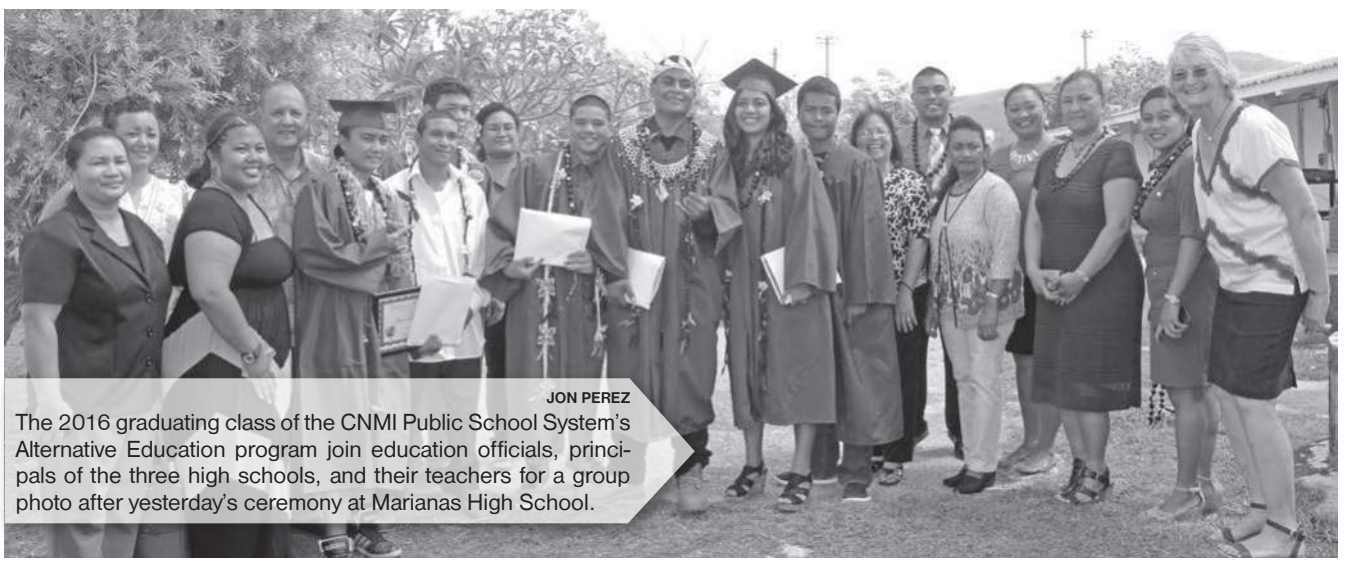
Alternative education graduates ready for next adventure

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Six of the 10 graduates of the CNMI Public School System's Alternative Education said they are ready to face their next adventure. Two will be going to college; two more will be joining the U.S. Marines Corps, while two others are already working with the hopes of someday making a career in engineering.



JON PEREZ
The 2016 graduating class of the CNMI Public School System's Alternative Education program join education officials, principals of the three high schools, and their teachers for a group photo after yesterday's ceremony at Marianas High School.

Seven of the 10 attended yesterday's simple graduation ceremonies held at the Alternative Education building inside the Marianas High School compound. Six of the graduates came from MHS while Kagman and Saipan Southern high schools had two each.

Education officials—led by CNMI State Board of Education chair Herman Guerrero, Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan, and Alternative Education director Felisa Brel—their teachers, parents, and relatives were also present to join them in celebrating this important part of their lives.

Kekoa Ruak and Janet Jones have decided to go to college with Ethan Calvo and Marco Dela Rosa saying they would join the Marines. Jocelyn Deleon Guerrero and Jerrold Calvo are already part of the island's local labor force.

Ruak told his fellow graduates to be proud since they are now part of the foundation of the new reputation of alternative education. He said that he would work first and save money before going to college. "I plan to go to Colorado for college. Although, I just haven't decided where to apply and what course to take."

He added that it would be a total adventure going to Colorado since they don't have any relatives living or working there. "That's the sense of adventure, I just want to get lost unlike here on Saipan where you know everyone and it is easy to get around."

Jones, meanwhile, chose to go south of the CNMI at the University of Guam where she hopes to finish a degree in language arts. The 20-year-old, who was awarded a certificate of recognition for the determination she has shown, added that she plans to come back to Saipan and be a teacher.

PSS behavioral consultant Tai Doram, the guest inspirational speaker, told Dela Rosa and Ethan Calvo that the United States Armed Forces has two-year military courses that give you the rank of second lieutenant in the Army, Marines, and Air Force and ensign in the Navy.

Doram encouraged the graduates to continue believing in themselves, telling them the difference between crabs and ants. "Crabs inside bucket, if one of them tries to get out, will be pulled down by the others. But the ants, they would help each other by forming a bridge for everyone's survival."

"The greatness of who you are as a person is already there. Do not take advice from unproductive people. Don't follow anyone who is not going anywhere. If you decided to stay in the CNMI, make sure it is your own choice and you are not forced.h"

Sablan, meanwhile, revealed that the Alternative Education program will have a new home in one of the buildings at the PSS office compound near MHS.

COMMONWEALTH CASINO COMMISSION
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
P.O. Box 500237
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. +1 (670) 233-1857/58
Facsimile: +1 (670) 233-1856
E-mail: info@cnmicasinocommission.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Commonwealth Casino Commission ("Commission"), hereby give notice that the Commission has scheduled a meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library (Technology Room) in Susupe, Saipan.

The following Agenda will be discussed:

I. **PRELIMINARIES:**
   A. Call to Order
   B. Roll Call
   C. Adoption of Agenda
   D. Adoption of Minutes – February 19, 2016
II. **REPORTS:**
   A. Report by the Chairman
   B. Report by the Executive Director
III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
IV. **OLD BUSINESS:**
   A. Discussions on Casino Minimum Internal Control Standards (MICS)
   B. UNLV Training – Post Training Discussions
   C. Casino Regulations – Emergency Adoption
V. **NEW BUSINESS:**
   A. Imperial Pacific International (CNMI), LLC Request to increase Rebate Percentage on the Rolling Chip Program
   B. New Licensure Procedures for Corporate Officers/Investors
   C. Casino Key Employees – Provisional Licenses
VI. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
VII. **MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**
VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Commission may vote to meet in Executive Session. In addition, the Commission may extend its official meeting for another day if necessary.

/s/ Juan M. Sablan
Chairman

HIMAWARI 10th Anniversary
Concert in Saipan
津軽三味線
Tsugaru Syamisen
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RISOKAI (11 players)
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HIMAWARI 2F Multi-Purpose Hall
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$10
Entrance fee per person
In Cooperation with Marianas Visitors Authority, Japanese Society of Northern Marianas
後援 マリアナ政府観光局 北マリアナ日本人会
TICKETS ARE STILL AVAILABLE AT HIMAWARI

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 16-019

Opening Date: Thursday, March 31, 2016
Closing Date: Friday, April 29, 2016

Internal Auditor
(Re-Announcement)

DUTIES: Under the direct supervision of the CUC Board of Directors. May supervise staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff is trained; ensuring that employees follow policies and procedures; maintaining a healthy and safe working environment; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations. Coordinates and conducts comprehensive internal financial, operational and/or information systems audits to determine compliance with, and effectiveness of established controls and regulations; implements audit programs to address and improve operational efficiency and to minimize risk exposure. Researches business control needs and identifies audit scope and objectives; prepares audit work plans; identifies key stakeholders; and determines scheduling and audit processes. Performs and/or coordinates assessments and internal audit activities related to controls, compliance, and operational efficiency; analyzes risk; collects, researches and analyzes financial and operational data, records and information; and identifies issues and deficiencies. Communicates and documents audit findings, risk exposures, and internal control issues; prepares and presents reports and recommendations for corrective actions, internal control improvements, and methods to improve operational efficiency. Reviews and evaluates internal audit processes and procedures; provides recommendations for efficiency and quality improvements and/or automated processes. Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

LOCATION : **Saipan**, Northern Mariana Islands, USA.
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(Salary is negotiable based on qualifications and experience.)
POSITIONS : One (1).
CONTRACT : Two (2) Year Contract.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: **Education:** Bachelor's Degree in business, finance or related field and 5-7 years of related experience; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above, unless otherwise subject to any other requirements set forth in law or regulation. **Licensing/Certification Requirements:** Valid U.S. Driver's License with appropriate class; Certified Internal Auditor or Certified Information Systems Auditor. **Knowledge of:** Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Supervisory principles, practices and techniques (based on assignment); US Generally Accepted Accounting Principles; US Generally Accepted Auditing Standards; Financial, management and operational analysis principles; Internal audit methods, controls and standards relevant to area of assignment; Mathematical principles; Research methods; Customer service principles; Modern office technology. **Skill In:** Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards; Supervising, monitoring, training and evaluating staff (based on assignment); Conducting comprehensive internal audits; Assessing internal controls and risk; Reviewing operational effectiveness and compliance; Identifying audit scope and objectives; Planning and implementing schedules and audit process flow; Researching and analyzing data and information; Documenting and presenting audit findings and recommendations; Providing customer service and advising management on compliance practices; Reviewing processes and providing recommendations to improve efficiencies and quality; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. Applicants may be tested. Subject to a pre-employment drug screening.

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Teenager in rape case gets 10 years in prison

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa K. Kim-Tenorio slapped a 10-year prison sentence against George Norris Langu Jr., a 19-year-old who broke into a house and raped his 16-year-old neighbor on Saipan.

"A strong message must be sent to defendant and the community that sexual assault, in any capacity, will not be tolerated," Kim-Tenorio said.

Langu was given credit of 201 days for time served.

Upon completing the prison term, the defendant will be placed on supervised probation for five years.

Langu was ordered to pay restitution to the victim in an amount to be determined later, plus $100 in court costs, and $100 per year in probation fee.

Kim-Tenorio ordered Langu to submit to examinations focusing on sex offender counseling and abide by the treatment decisions made by the Community Guidance Center.

The judge required Langu to complete a drug and alcohol counseling and any other recommended counseling by the treatment provider or the Office of Adult Probation.

The Office of the Attorney General charged Langu with burglary, sexual assault in the first degree, assault and battery, disturbing the peace, and criminal mischief.

Langu signed a plea deal with the government and pleaded guilty last Feb. 23 to the offense of sexual assault in the first degree.

As part of the plea deal, the government moved to dismiss the remaining charges. The court granted the motion.

At the sentencing hearing on Tuesday, acting chief prosecutor Barbara Cepeda recommended a sentence of between eight and 12 years imprisonment.

Cepeda argued that defendant's youthfulness leaves a high possibility of rehabilitation. She also stated that defendant's intoxication impaired his ability to use proper judgment.

Assistant public defender Matthew Meyer, counsel for Langu, recommended an eight-year prison term.

Kim-Tenorio recognized that Langu's remorsefulness, lack of criminal history, and ability to be rehabilitated as mitigating factors.

Kim-Tenorio also acknowledged the parties' and victim's request for a lenient sentence.

The judge said Langu, an otherwise smart and thoughtful person, made a horrible decision that will now rob him of his formative years and a brighter future.

"Nonetheless, one's remorse and apologies do not negate criminal behavior," she said.

Kim-Tenorio said by unlawfully engaging in sexual penetration without consent, Langu committed a permanent violation of the victim's authority over her own body.

"Such an invasion not only causes physical pain but leaves a traumatic and immeasurable scar to bear over one's lifetime," the judge pointed out.

Kim-Tenorio added that pleas for leniency offend basic notions of justice for victims of this crime and the community at large.

Two police officers responded last Sept. 1 at 3:57am to a call about a sexual assault incident in Chalan Kanoa.

The alleged victim told police that she was asleep inside her room when a man sexually assaulted her. The girl said she struggled, prompting the suspect she later recognized as Langu, to run outside the house.

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TOTE BAG: Receive a custom tote bag when you apply for a personal United MileagePlus credit card. Limit one (1) bag per customer per eligible offer. We reserve the right to substitute an item of similar value. Offer expires April 30, 2016 or when supplies are exhausted.

Student entrepreneurs to bring products, services to market

Student entrepreneurs from Saipan high schools will convene at the Junior Achievement (JA) Company Program Trade Fair today, Thursday, March 31, 2016, at the Garapan Street Market to showcase their products and/or services.

Captured, Whimsical Wonders, Knighteens, and Blue Marianas Produxtions—student companies from Kagman High School, Saipan Southern High School, Mount Carmel High School, and Marianas High School, respectively—will bring their products and/or services to market.

"Be sure to stop in between 6pm and 9pm to see our achievers in action. The trade fair is a key event for the JA Company Program as it provides an opportunity for our students to demonstrate and sharpen their sales and business skills. In just eight weeks, our young entrepreneurs have been able to develop their products and/or services," said Commonwealth Development Authority Economic Development Analyst/JA Company Program coordinator Carline B. Sablan.

Sablan adds, "Captured will be showcasing its custom canvas framing service as well as original canvassed art. Whimsical Wonders will be featuring big bubbles called Bu-Bu-Bubbles. Blue Marianas Produxtions will be promoting its event-planning service and upcoming events, while Knighteens will be featuring its student-designed T-shirt called Knightee."

The CNMI Junior Achievement Company Program is supported by the CDA, Saipan Chamber of Commerce, CNMI Public School System, Bank of Hawaii, IT&E, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Pacifica Insurance Underwriters Inc., and Tan Holdings Corp.

Junior Achievement is a worldwide non-profit organization that provides educational programs for youth to gain the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and economic choices. Corporate and community volunteers deliver relevant, hands-on experiences that give students the knowledge and skills in financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship.

Junior Achievement is one of the largest non-profit organizations worldwide dedicated to inspiring youth to own their future and their economic success. Junior Achievement is in more than 120 countries worldwide with reach to more than 10 million students and powered by more than 430,000 volunteers from all sectors of society. ***(PR)***

BECQ EAM Island Wide Cleanup this Friday

In celebration of the 33rd Environmental Awareness Month, the regularly scheduled Bureau of Environmental & Coastal Quality Cleanup Brigade for April will coincide with this year's BECQ EAM Island Wide Cleanup event scheduled for Friday, April 29, 2016 from 2:30pm to 4:30pm. For more information on how to participate in this event, please contact EAM Island Wide Cleanup event coordinators Aileen Benavente or Tom Pangelinan at 664-8500.

The Pak Pak Beach Cleanup was successful with 27 volunteers participating. Thanks to, students from Brilliant Star, Kagman High School, Saipan Southern High School, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., and other volunteers about 300 lbs of marine debris was removed from the beach and properly disposed of. During last year's Island Wide Cleanup, over 4,070 lbs of trash were picked up from our roadsides and beaches and properly disposed.

The BECQ is looking forward to a repeat success, so join BECQ's 2016 Island Wide Cleanup and "Pick It Up!" Let us work together for the health of our coral reefs and cleanliness of our beaches for everyone to enjoy.

For more information about volunteering, please contact the BECQ office at 664-8500/1. ***(PR)***

Bank of Hawaii Corporation

and Subsidiaries

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
At the Close of Business December 31, 2015 (dollars in thousands)

ASSETS		LIABILITIES AND SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY	
Interest-Bearing Deposits in Other Banks	$ 4,130	Deposits	$13,251,103
Investment Securities	6,239,554	Securities Sold Under Agreements to Repurchase	628,857
Funds Sold	592,892	Funds Purchased	7,333
Loans Held for Sale	4,808	Retirement Benefits Payable	47,374
Loans and Leases	7,878,985	Accrued Interest Payable	5,032
Allowance for Loan and Lease Losses	(102,880)	Taxes Payable and Deferred Taxes	17,737
Net Loans and Leases	7,776,105	Other Liabilities	135,534
		Other Debt	245,786
TOTAL EARNING ASSETS	14,617,489		
		TOTAL LIABILITIES	14,338,756
Cash and Noninterest-Bearing Deposits	158,699		
Premises and Equipment	111,199	Shareholders' Equity	
Accrued Interest Receivable	44,719	Common Stock	575
Foreclosed Real Estate	824	Capital Surplus	542,041
Mortgage Servicing Rights	23,002	Accumulated Other Comprehensive Loss	(23,557)
Goodwill	31,517	Retained Earnings	1,316,260
Bank-Owned Life Insurance	268,175	Treasury Stock, at Cost	(719,059)
Other Assets	199,392		
		TOTAL SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY	1,116,260
TOTAL ASSETS	$ 15,455,016		
		TOTAL LIABILITIES AND SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY	$15,455,016

BANK OF HAWAII - SAIPAN
STATEMENT OF CONDITION
At the Close of Business December 31, 2015 (dollars in thousands)

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Cash	$ 1,174	Deposits	$ 174,165
Loans, Net of Unearned Income	28,680	Accrued Interest Payable	7
Allowance for Loan Losses	(895)	Other Liabilities	36
Net Loans	27,785		
Accrued Interest Receivable	209	TOTAL LIABILITIES	$ 174,208
Due from Head Office	144,694		
Premises and Equipment	120		
Other Assets	226		
TOTAL ASSETS	$ 174,208		

The audit reports of Bank of Hawaii Corporation and Bank of Hawaii - Saipan Branches are available for public review at the Office of the Director of Banking, Department of Commerce, Capital Hill, Saipan.

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INVITATION FOR BIDS

This ad is paid with HUD Funds by NMHC

NMHC IFB 2016-009
Building Maintenance of NMHC's Housing Units in Saipan

Governor Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Governor Victor Hocog, through the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, are hereby giving notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids for the Building Maintenance of NMHC's Housing Units in Saipan.

Interested individuals or firms may pick up a copy of the Project Package beginning Monday, March 21, 2016, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office on **Monday, April 4, 2016, at 9:00 a.m.**, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan. Bidders will have the opportunity to tour the housing subdivisions and inspect several housing units owned by NMHC and the Central Office that will be covered under the proposed contract. Attendance at this conference and site visit are considered essential to the bidders' understanding of the project elements and a company that does not have a representative in attendance at the pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder. Inquiries regarding this solicitation must be addressed in writing to the NMHC Corporate Director at P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than 9:00 a.m., Thursday, April 7, 2016.

Sealed bids must be marked **NMHC IFB 2016-009**. For bidders within the CNMI, one (1) original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill, Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950, not later than **10:00 a.m., local time Thursday, April 21, 2016.** Bids received after the date and time will not be accepted. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notice of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m., local time, April 21, 2016, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, one (1) original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **April 21, 2016**, and must be received at Procurement and Supply no later than **April 28, 2016.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill, Saipan at **10:00 a.m., local time, April 29, 2016.** However, if no notice of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m., local time on April 21, 2016.**

All labor on this project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of $6.05 per hour which took effect on September 30, 2014 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of $.50 per hour as announced by the U.S. Department of Labor and/or the CNMI Department of Labor, whichever is higher.

NMHC hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contacts entered into pursuant to this advertisement, small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, religion, sex, disabilities or national origin.

This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires the successful bidder to the "maximum extend feasible", take affirmative steps to provide training, contracting and employment opportunities and help ensure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents in the CNMI.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section NMIAC 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be awarded a contract with NMHC.

The Commonwealth Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in the bids if determined by the government to be in its best interest. All bids shall become the property of the Commonwealth Government.

For information, call Ms. Jocelyn C. Seman, Office Manager/Procurement Officer or visit our Central Office in Garapan Saipan, during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ **JESSE S. PALACIOS**
Corporate Director

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, Procurement & Supply

Charter Day committee extends competitions deadline

The Northern Marianas College Charter Day Committee has extended the deadline for those interested in participating in the Charter Day competitions: Marianas Idol and Battle of the Bands. The new deadline to submit registration forms has been extended to Tuesday, April 5, 2016 and can be submitted to Building K or emailed to cassandra.dl-guerrero@marianas.edu.

The Marianas Idol competition showcases the CNMI's local singers while the Battle of the Bands allows local bands from different musical genres to compete.

The Northern Marianas College Charter Day will be a two-day celebration that will take place on Friday, April 8, 2016, from 4pm to 9pm and Saturday, April 9, 2016, from 9am to 4pm at NMC's South Field at the As Terlaje campus.

Those interested in competing in any of the competitions can pick up an application form from Cassandra Deleon Guerrero at NMC's Building K, or can download application forms at www.marianas.edu. There is no application fee for any of the competitions.

Applications for the competitions are due Tuesday, April 5, 2016, by 4pm. The auditions for the Marianas Idol singing competition and the Battle of the Bands will be on April 6, 2016 the venue for the auditions will be at NMC's Building D room 1 at the As Terlaje campus.

For the Battle of the Bands, groups are required to bring their own equipment. In addition to inviting participants for the competitions, the Charter Day Planning Committee is also inviting agencies, businesses, clubs and other civic organizations to participate by purchasing booth space for the following categories: food/drink, game booths, retail (arts and crafts, toys etc.), and information.

The deadline to submit applications for booth spaces is on Friday, April 1, 2016. Booth space is limited so applications should be submitted as soon the deadline is announced. The booth fee is $100 for NMC clubs and non-profit organizations and $250 for commercial vendors.

For more information about booth spaces, please contact Queanna Sablan at 234-6774 or email her at queanna.sablan@marianas.edu.

Additional information about NMC Charter Day is also available online at www.marianas.edu. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A band in last year's Charter Day Celebration performs during the Battle of the Bands competition. This year's Charter Day celebration will be held on Friday, April 8, and Saturday, April 9, 2016, at NMC's South Field at the As Terlaje Campus.

IN 2016 BUSINESSWOMAN OF THE YEAR GALA

Pioneer businesswomen to be honored with Lifetime Achievement Awards

MAITE, Guam—First Hawaiian Bank and *Guam Business Magazine* will present Lifetime Achievement Awards to two recipients on Saturday, April 30, at the 11th Annual Businesswoman of the Year Gala at the Hyatt Regency Guam.

This year, the Lifetime Achievement Awards will be presented to Nenita "Nita" C. Baldovino and June L. Chang.

The award recognizes businesswomen in the region who have been pioneers in their fields, have worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life in their island community and who serve as role models for businesswomen today.

Baldovino is the owner of Rambies Corp., which does business as Rambies Fast Food and Rambies Catering. Baldovino opened the first Rambies Fast Food Restaurant in 1987 at the Hafa Adai Exchange. She is the president of the Filipino Community of Guam, a position she also held in 2000 and 2005.

Chang is the president and general manager of Horizon Travel Center, which has been in business for more than 30 years. Chang is one of the founders of the Guam Travel Agents Association.

Proceeds from the gala will fund scholarships for students pursuing business and related degrees at the University of Guam, Guam Community College and Northern Marianas College.

For more information, contact Joy White, assistant editor of *Guam Business Magazine*, at (671) 649-0883 ext. 125 or assist_editor@glimpsesofguam.com, or Barbie Jane Agahan, assistant advertising manager of First Hawaiian Bank, at (671) 475-7908 or bagahan@fhb.com. ***(PR)***

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*The i425 (New unit) is only $100 and the i335 (Refurbished unit) is only $49 with a 24-month sign-up on the $20/mo. Choice Plan 20. 20¢/min. will be charged upon exceeding the 600minutes Local Call limit of Choice Plan 20. Phone model and color may vary and subject to availability. A $40 security deposit per unit is required. Rates are subject to change without prior notice. Rates are exclusive of LNP and USF charges. While supplies last. Some conditions apply.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

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EDITORIAL

End Arctic Ocean drilling

When oil executives look at an offshore drilling rig, they see money. Environmentalists, though, see a disaster waiting to happen. The Obama administration should have listened more closely to the latter before including in its 2017-2022 drilling plan a proposal to allow three new offshore leases in Alaska, two of them in the Arctic Ocean. Yes, the Arctic Ocean, one of the most fragile natural environments in the world, where disturbances can have devastating impacts. In the event of a serious spill or leak, the region is so remote it would be exceedingly difficult to muster workers and equipment to contain the emergency. Long winters marked by subzero temperatures and an ice cap that shifts with the winds and the currents add a layer of complexity to cleaning up a disastrous spill. The risks clearly exceed the rewards.

To its credit, the Department of Interior simultaneously announced that it would abandon proposed Atlantic oil leases off Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. That decision stemmed from a declining market for oil as well as opposition among coastal communities and the fishing industry. The Pentagon objected, too, over fears that the presence of drill rigs could interfere with military training and national defense efforts. It would have been nice if the government had acknowledged the environmental risks as well, but at least it reached the right decision.

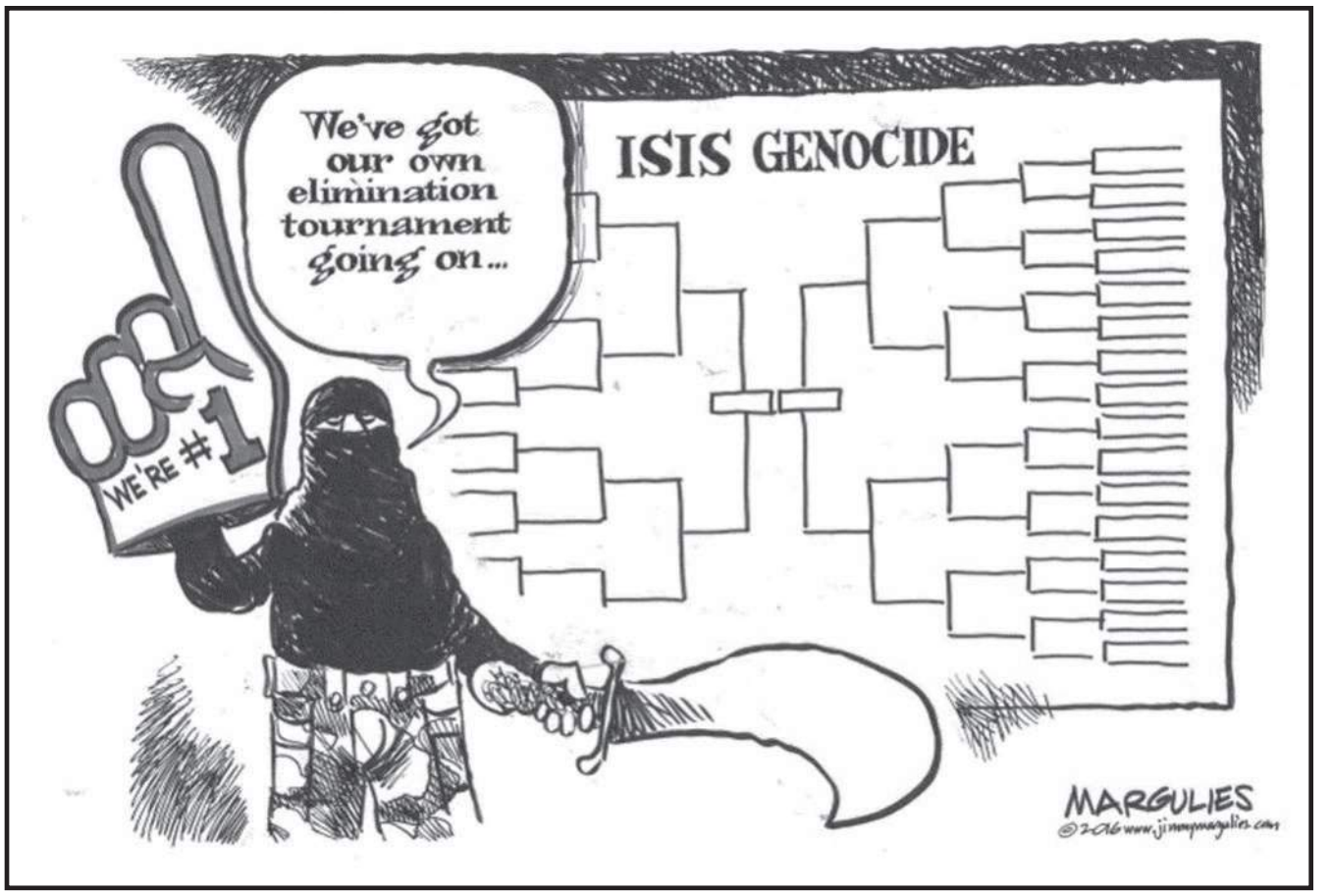
U.S. policymakers need to focus more on that bigger picture: the environmental impact of energy decisions, especially as scientists warn that climate change will be taking its toll on the planet much sooner and more quickly than had been anticipated. (It is ironic that global warming has led to a smaller Arctic ice cap, which makes it easier and more enticing for oil companies to try to extract from beneath the Arctic Ocean more of the very fossil fuels that got us into this climate mess in the first place.)

The government's most recent experiment with an offshore lease in the Arctic ended in failure last year when Royal Dutch Shell spent $7 billion to sink a highly controversial exploratory well in the Chukchi Sea that failed to find significant amounts of oil and natural gas. The government then canceled additional planned lease sales and lease extensions in the Beaufort and Chukchi seas, citing low global oil prices and limited industry interest. And it continues to hold out the possibility of canceling the three proposed new leases, as well, if circumstances warrant. The government's proposed 2017-2022 drilling plan also declares 9.8 million Arctic Ocean acres under federal control ineligible for drilling.

That's good. But the government should close the entire Arctic Ocean to off-shore drilling.

Among the most pristine marine environments in the world, the Chukchi Sea supports such protected species as walruses, ringed seals and the spectacled eider, a sea duck. It also is home to half of the nation's polar bear population. The neighboring Beaufort Sea also is a fragile home to polar bears, ringed seals and other species, and is important to a half-dozen types of whales. As we saw with the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster

See END on Next Page



the trump card

I heard that in the card game of Bridge, one that ranks above others is a "trump" card, a valuable resource used as a surprise to gain advantage. Informally, it also means an admirable person.

The self-proclaimed billionaire worth $5 billion to $6 billion by his claim counts for a lot of quarters. The Donald says he got his start by borrowing a million from his father. We should all have such a difficult start!

The Donald is a flamboyant character, over the shroud of advertised data. He ran for the U.S. Presidency in 2000 winning two primaries under the Reform Party. Barrack Hussein Obama lost his campaign to be a Democratic congressman to a Republican opponent at the time, resuscitated as a fresh face out from Illinois when he captured the Democratic imagination in a speech at the Chicago Convention of 2004 while running for the Senate.

The New York Times claims that The Donald was pushed to his candidacy when Obama roasted him in a White House Correspondents' Dinner 2011, where the President and the audience traditionally receive good-hearted ribbing. The Donald was reportedly pouting when he hurried out of the door after the dinner. No kidding.

It is The Donald back in the news. The former owner of Trump Entertainment Resorts that went belly-up and was rescued by Carl Icahn was just endorsed by CNMI Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. And why not? The Donald after all is known for "gambling" his way, and why not the presidency of the United States? The island is currently being schooled to be a casino Mecca of the western Pacific. Trump Enterprises?

Unlike Obama's mistaken choice of ridiculing The Donald, we take him seriously for he represents a segment of U.S. society that has been pilloried by shades of color since the days following the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

I arrived in the United States in 1965 thinking that civil rights was a foregone reality, schooled in the notion that when something becomes law, it is the end rather than the start of a done deal. Not so in America. Change happens because a few dare to stand at the wedgeblade of history to proclaim and live out of something innovative, and history bends. Civil Rights legislation was such a bending occasion but definitely not the end of a dynamic movement in history that rippled around the world.

In any political reality, there are discernable forces that either aim to preserve what is deemed working (a conservative impulse) and a desire to create (a progressive drive). Both movements are legitimate since both simultaneously tend to produce a balance.

George McGovern was perceived to be too far left field so we got Richard Nixon. With unabashed liberal Bernie Sanders of the northeast, Hillary is keeping her options close to the center. An activist when Hillary was Mrs. President in Washington, carved down to size after the elected opposition pointed the absence of her being chosen by an electorate in her official functions to push for the Health Care plan of 1993 at the Clinton White House, she took a low profile.

The GOP decided to go conservative, The Donald led Ted Cruz while Ben Carson the neurosurgeon dropped out of the race, and Marco Rubio fell by the wayside. He exited graciously reminding all that the Republican party is more noted for what it stands for than the emotions of hatred and disdain that The Donald allegedly unleashed. John Kasich of Ohio threads toward the middle providing the Gophers' balance, though his chances in the ticket as a VP, is out of the question. A brokered GOP convention in July is a story in the making.

The media plays up the trump card as The Donald, less than a year my junior (I am 70), a year older than Hillary, points the finger of history backwards, when the time calls for crossing lines forward, first, that of color, which Obama did, and with integrity, twice supported by thinking Americans. Next is obviously the gender line, and that's why I predicted Hillary creating a First Gentleman out of William Jefferson Clinton.

With The Donald, Hillary is Madame President, perhaps, even for two terms. I do not perceive the American people taking their emotional hiccups too seriously to the polls, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres notwithstanding. The Donald is entertaining in the electoral tableau. That The Donald out rightly changes personal style and political stance as he becomes the GOP choice, a significant bending of history in politics occurs.

The Donald jumped over 15 heavies: FL Jeb Bush, WI Scott Walker, FL Marco Rubio, Neurosurgeon Ben Carson, KY Rand Paul, AR Mike Huckabee, TX Ted Cruz, NJ Chris Christie, TX Rick Perry, OH John Kasich, PA Rick Santorum, Carly Fiorina, SC Lindsay Graham, and LA Bobby Jindal. The Donald deserves a big hand! It would be fatal if the GOP reneged at the convention.

Nevertheless, as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of England once said, "if you want things said, listen to a man; if you want things done, find a woman." March is Women's Month. It's the trump card. I rest my case.

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

Patty Duke spoke to a generation of girls

By GINA BARRECA
The Hartford Courant

Gina Barreca is an English professor at the University of Connecticut, a feminist scholar who has written eight books, and a columnist for the Hartford Courant. *She can be reached through her website at http://www.ginabarreca.com.*

Patty Duke's death Tuesday (at the too early age of 69) robs us of not only one of my generation's great performers, but leaves us bereft with a sense of grief for our girlhood.

Times weren't necessarily easier then—they certainly weren't easy for Duke whose triumphs and desperate moments we followed in tabloids and legitimate papers—but she is one of those public figures on screen and off with whom many of us felt a lifelong connection. To say I feel a sense of personal grief is not an exaggeration.

Duke won an Oscar in 1962 at 16, playing Helen Keller in "The Miracle Worker." She originated her role on Broadway before receiving Hollywood acclaim. But it wasn't Patty Duke in "The Miracle Worker" who captured my imagination; nor was it Duke's cataclysmic performance as Neely O'Hara in 1967's "Valley of the Dolls," although that certainly mesmerized me.

No, the Patty Duke I idolized is the one I knew from "The Patty Duke Show," a popular television sitcom on ABC from 1963 to 1966 during my wonder years. Duke played identical cousins, Patty and Cathy.

Cathy grew up in England and had a posh accent and fancy tastes. Patty had "only seen the sights a girl could see from Brooklyn Heights," according to the show's theme song. Patty chewed gum incessantly and could be counted on to mess up at least once during every program. Cathy wore her hair in a pageboy. Patty wore hers in a flip. This is how you could tell them apart. Cathy also had a much kinder, gentler look, whereas Patty looked ready to make a wisecrack and laugh out loud. Patty enjoyed loud, raucous rock 'n' roll music.

Cathy was the good girl, Patty was the bad girl, and "The Patty Duke Show" illustrated perfectly the divide between the two.

The show was a favorite in my crowd, and not only because many of us, like Patty, had only seen the sights from Brooklyn Heights. We were neither good nor bad but a mixture of both.

Maybe we were more Patty than Cathy—after all, as the song said, Patty liked "to rock 'n' roll and a hot dog make her lose control." Cathy, however, preferred "a minuet, The Ballet Russes, and crepes suzette"—and we had no idea what any of those things were. But we tried to behave more like Cathy because we knew that she was more feminine and therefore more desirable. If we acted out the show in somebody's garage, there was always a fight over who got stuck playing Patty. Playing Patty was almost as bad as having to play one of the boys. So why did we like the program? Why did we watch the reruns?

I think it's what could be called the Identical Cousin Syndrome. The Identical Cousin Syndrome is the working out of the good girl/bad girl split. The good girl/bad girl split presupposes that any one woman can't be both sweet and wicked, nice and bitchy, or generous and selfish at the same time.

We know traditional heroes can be both brave and cowardly or mean and melting, because a hero is hardly a hero if he doesn't have some vulnerability. But women are not allowed to have another side. We're supposed to be all good girl, all the time. Heroines, unlike heroes, are not allowed to show any emotional cleavage.

Thinking back, Patty didn't really behave that badly—she came home late, but she never got pregnant. She was, nevertheless, as close as mid 1960s television could get to the bad girl. She was loud, uncouth and she expressed her emotions openly. Cathy could be counted on not to laugh at the wrong moments, because the good girl never lost control, not over a hot dog, not over anything.

Why did we love "The Patty Duke Show"? Maybe it's why we also loved Patty Duke: sometimes she behaved badly and self-destructively and sometimes she was she was magnificent and admirable. She was, after all, two halves of the same woman, good and bad, just like all of us.

Concerted political power needs to confront concentrated poverty

By JESSE JACKSON
Tribune News Service

You can write to the Rev. Jesse Jackson in care of this newspaper or by email at jjackson@rainbowpush.org. Follow him on Twitter @RevJJackson.

This year's presidential primaries have highlighted the importance of people of color to the Democratic Party coalition. Hillary Clinton's lead in the party's nomination race comes almost entirely from her strength among African-Americans and Latino voters. When people of color favor one candidate by large margins, they make the difference.

That will be true in the general election as well. Democratic nominees win if people of color vote in large numbers. If turnout is down or the vote is split, Democrats — who regularly lose the majority of white voters — will lose.

This reality means that African-Americans, Latinos and Asian-Americans can make political demands. Politicians must compete to win our votes. The power of this can be seen with the Dreamers and the Democrats' embrace of comprehensive immigration reform, with Black Lives Matter and Democratic candidates putting criminal justice reform at the top of their agendas. Voting rights and equal rights under the law also gain traction.

Missing, however, is any concerted demand for economic justice, even though African-Americans and Latinos still face a stark economic divide. African-Americans lost the most wealth in the Great Recession and have recovered the least. They were the most targeted and harmed by the fraud committed by mortgage peddlers. The gap between black and white household wealth has tripled in the past quarter-century (with blacks' median level at $11,030 while the white median is $134,230). Black unemployment remains higher and incomes remain lower.

African-Americans and Latinos are more likely to be in poverty. Thirty-eight percent of black children are in poverty, as opposed to 11 percent of whites. Worse, blacks and Latinos are much more likely to grow up in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty. They are 10 times as likely to be in poor neighborhoods in Chicago than poor whites are. Nearly 30 percent of poor blacks live in poor neighborhoods in St. Louis, compared to 1.6 percent of poor whites. Concentrated poverty — what scholars term the "double burden" — digs children into a deeper hole of unsafe streets, impoverished schools, inadequate health facilities, poor markets, poor mass transit, lousy parks and more.

We need a movement that does for economic justice what Black Lives Matter has done for criminal justice. We need to develop a plan for targeted investment in neighborhoods of concerted poverty (many of which are rural and white). We need a summit on urban reconstruction that brings together the relevant agencies of government and lays out a plan. Movements like the fast food workers calling for a $15 minimum wage and unions need to gain real support from elected political leaders.

Some say targeted investment is inappropriate, even discriminatory. Somehow it is legitimate to target African-Americans for voter registration, legitimate to target us for getting out the vote. Yet targeted investment based on need draws objections. That doesn't make sense.

Some say a rising tide will raise all boats, but we know that is not true. Some boats are stuck on the bottom. Those who came here on ocean liners as immigrants came looking for a job. Those who were brought here on slave ships found themselves up for sale. The former worked for wages and, with struggle, were able to build wealth. The latter worked for the lash and were stripped of any wealth they helped to create. Race-neutral standards simply ignore a reality where race hasn't been neutral.

African-Americans and Latinos remain the most optimistic about America. We are far more likely to believe our children will do better than we have. Part of this is President Obama and the natural desire to defend his presidency. Part of this comes from the progress African-Americans have witnessed, with ancestors who came over on slave ships and parents who grew up in segregation, and now an African-American in the White House.

That appreciation should not, however, stop us from pushing for economic justice. It is clear that Democrats can't win without the enthusiastic support of people of color. Surely, we should insist on an agenda commensurate with the size of our problems from those who want our support. We now have the political opportunity that Dr. King dreamed of to demand justice. The question is whether we have the will.

END

From Page 10

in the Gulf of Mexico, and the 1969 leak that covered 35 miles of coastline around Santa Barbara, Calif., offshore drilling is fraught with potential dangers that differ from land leaks, which are more easily contained and cleaned up. A recent federal study found a 75 percent chance over 77 years of at least one large spill from Arctic offshore wells. That's an unnecessarily high level of risk just to add more oil spigots to the nation's supply.

Especially since U.S. demand for fossil-fuel energy is down from a decade ago. And not just for oil. Coal-powered electrical production has decreased as reliance on less-polluting natural gas and renewable sources has increased. So the nation is moving, albeit late and slowly, in the right direction. Which makes this a good time to not only close the Arctic but also consider freezing new offshore leases elsewhere. (Existing wells — the vast majority of them in the western Gulf of Mexico — account for only 16 percent of the nation's domestic oil supply.)

Reducing our reliance on fossil fuels is neither an easy nor inexpensive transition, but it's a crucial one. Placing the Arctic off limits to drilling is an easy step, and the Obama administration should take it.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A President Hillary Clinton?

We know CNMI Washington Delegate Kilili Sablan is enamored over her—he has to, his survival in office is dependent on playing ball with the Democratic Party. And if the GOP candidate is elected to the U.S. presidency, the Northern Marianas just might lose its treasured "parole" as granted to China (Russia) by Homeland Security. If that happens? Doomsday cometh. There goes the only industry and bread-winner we have, tourism. But at what cost?

Most of us also know that presidential candidate Hillary Clinton has a soiled history of untrustworthiness, deception, fraud, corruption—the list is endless—including "allegations" of drug dealings, murders, and directing billions of illicit dollars funneled into her/Bill's Clinton Foundation while she served as U.S. Secretary of State. More recently, the current "allegations" of treason by virtue of mishandling thousands of top secret emails through her unsecured server has put every single American—and we here in the islands—at risk: FBI investigators (147) already have enough emails, many proven to have been hacked by foreign nations, to indict her; Correspondence spiraling Hillary closer to spending time in prison before the November election.

So here's the question: with such a "tarnished background" can a President Hillary Clinton—the only first lady in the White House to undergo multiple and rigorous criminal investigations—be trusted to economically improve the CNMI's future? Or save us from warring aggressors bent on destroying America and our islands? And this: despite the mass murders around the world deliberately committed by sworn Muslim Jihadist terrorist, President Hillary—as with President Obama's failed policies of appeasement and delusion—has sworn to fling open U.S. citizenship, unlawfully—just to curry Latino votes and win in the 2016 November election. Will we be safer? Nuts.

Jihadist terrorist (and Iran) have already declared "death to America," Israel and other western nations. In the last five years, around the globe, they've beheaded, immolated, bombed, shot, knifed and raped well over seventy thousand of innocent men, women, and children while our country's "leaders" fret over "water-board torture" of our enemies. All of us need real American leaders to meet this threat head-on and fight back before it's too late. America must not cower behind being "politically correct" any longer while those killers continue their rampage. Clinton is not it.

If in doubt here's a site you might want to click on: "youtube-Hillary Clinton-One step from prison."

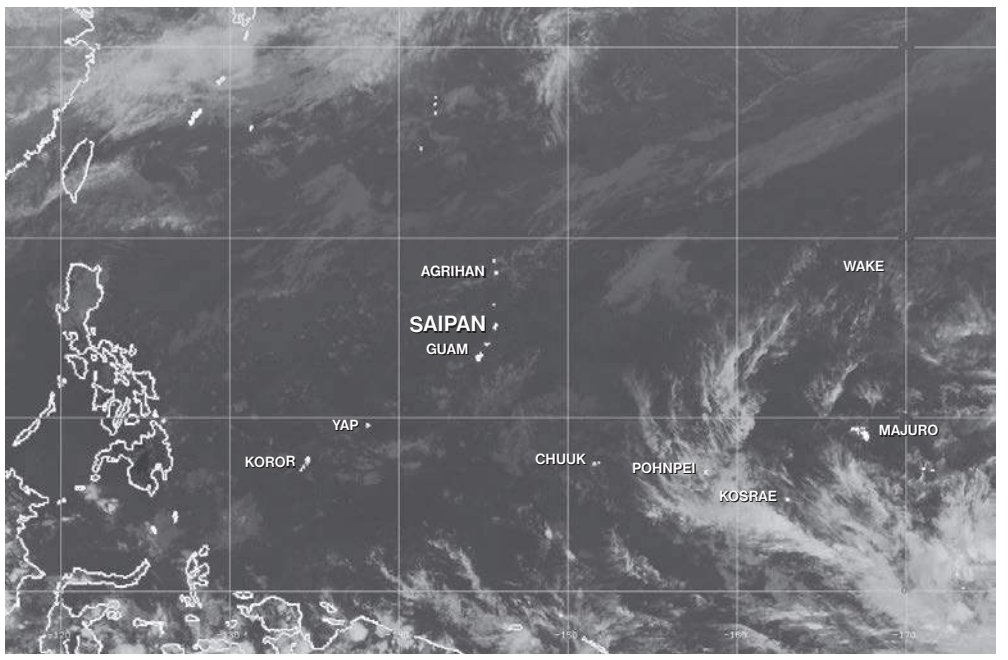
Lee Andersen
Chalan Kanoa

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
▲88° ▼76°	▲88° ▼76°	▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00 PM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2016
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N163E to 22N155E, then continues as a shear line north of Pagan and through 130E at 15n. Patchy showers are found along and up to 250 miles northwest of this boundary. A trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms near Pohnpei and Kosrae between 3N and 8N from 157E to164E. Low-level convergence is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of the Marshall Islands south of a line from 5N165E to 5N180. Another shear line heads west-northwest through 14N180 to 17N154E. Cloudiness and patchy showers are occurring along and up to 200miles north of the shear line.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼77
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼76
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲90	▼78
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼80
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼79
Kosrae	Showers	▲84	▼80
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼81

Around the Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲76	▼63
Beijing	Sunny	▲60	▼32
Hong Kong	Rain	▲62	▼52
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼68
London	Cloudy	▲53	▼46
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲77	▼52
Manila	Sunny	▲96	▼76
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲74	▼58
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼72
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲70	▼47
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲53	▼38
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲53	▼47
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲53	▼38
Rome	Partly Cloudy	▲61	▼44
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲59	▼45
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲65	▼52
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲55	▼32
Tokyo	Sunny	▲68	▼45
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲74	▼53

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:30 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
6:54 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
11:54 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
7:28 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:13 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:12 AM	6:30 PM
Saturday	6:11 AM	6:30 PM
Sunday	6:10 AM	6:30 PM
Monday	6:10 AM	6:30 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:47 AM	12:30 PM
Friday	1:37 AM	1:24 PM
Saturday	2:27 AM	2:20 PM
Sunday	3:17 AM	3:18 PM
Monday	4:07 AM	5:18 AM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2016

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	Daily via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/193	8:40am	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/193	1:30pm	11:10pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA2920/193	2:20pm	11:10pm	2 via GUM-ROR
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2928/193	6:05pm	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	9:00am+1	3, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2927	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2927	10:00am	5:35pm	3 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/2925	10:20pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2920	10:20pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2927	10:20pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2929	10:20pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

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TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

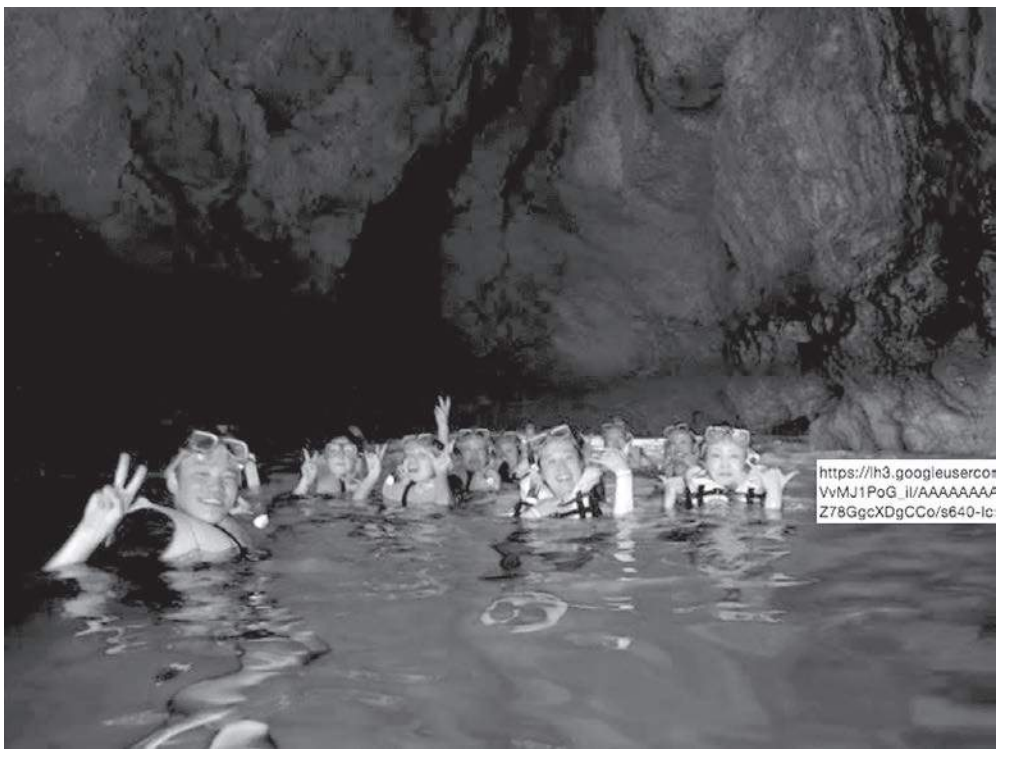
ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

More Japan travel agents explore Marianas

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Saipan's crystal clear waters welcomed representatives of JTB World Vacations, KNT Individual Tour, H.I.S, R& C Tours, Delta Air Lines, and the Marianas Visitors Authority's Japan office during their FAM tour on March 21-24, 2016. The FAM tour was organized by MVA and Delta to help increase travel from Japan to the Northern Mariana Islands.



Representatives of JTB World Vacations, KNT Individual Tour, H.I.S, R& C Tours, Delta Air Lines, and the Marianas Visitors Authority's Japan office snorkel at the Grotto in Saipan on March 23, 2016, as part of a FAM tour organized by MVA and Delta to help increase travel from Japan to the Northern Mariana Islands.

In a continuing bid to revitalize visitor arrivals from Japan, on March 21-24, 2016, the Marianas Visitors Authority and Delta Air Lines hosted a third round of travel trade FAM(iliarization) tours targeting wholesalers in the country.

The FAM tours are one of the proposals made in a December 2015 meeting on Saipan between CNMI officials, tourism industry leaders, and Delta management.

"This third group of industry tour planners from Japan is a continuation of tours first commenced in January and is just the beginning of the MVA's intensified efforts to bring more of the professionals who sell our destination to the destination," said MVA marketing manager Bruce Bateman. "There are many tourism industry partners coming together in this effort to revive the Japan market, and we are optimistic about the positive impact this will have on arrivals."

The group of nine included planners from JTB World Vacations, KNT Individual Tour, HIS, R&C Tours, Delta, and the MVA's Japan office. The FAM tour conducted site inspections at hotels and various tourist attractions. The group was also interviewed by local television channel KSPN2. They lodged at Fiesta Resort & Spa during their visit.

The MVA is also working with Delta Air Lines, the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, and other partners on another series of FAM tours beginning in April 2016 for up to 300 retail and group sales staff from four major travel agencies in Japan who will have the opportunity to experience Saipan either individually or with family or friends. ***(PR)***

UOG names Triplett director of Residence Halls

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

University of Guam director of Residence Halls Jonathan Triplett stands in front of one of three UOG Residence Halls.

The University of Guam has named Jonathan Triplett its new director of Residence Halls. Triplett is a graduate of Oklahoma City University where he earned both his Bachelor of Arts in Exercise Science in 2002 and a Masters in Education two years later.

Most recently, Triplett served as the director of Student Activities and Student Government Association Advisor at the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma, organizing wellness programs, outdoor adventure events, and other co-curricular programs.

"Mr. Triplett comes from a well-established background in education, diversity, and co-curricular programming," said Senior Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez. "We're very excited to see what improvements he'll bring to our residence halls and what positive impacts he'll have on our students."

Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Success Dr. Michael Gunn said he's looking forward to collaborating with Triplett on student-success centered activities and helping bridge the gap between student life and academics.

"Mr. Triplett is a great asset to the University," Gunn said. "I see a lot of potential where we can help students have a productive and enjoyable academic journey and campus life."

"Education is not just inside the classroom," Triplett added. "It's outside the classroom as well. I want to make the residence halls a living and learning community. This is where the students live, and this is their home. We want to give them an excellent experience in the residence halls and the University of Guam in general." ***(PR)***

Labor secretary to speak at SHRM meeting today

The Society for Human Resource Management NMI Chapter will have Edith DeLeon Guerrero, CNMI Secretary of Labor, presenting at its March general membership meeting today, March 31, at the Pacific Islands Club.

"This will be a good opportunity to hear Secretary Deleon Guerrero talk about what the Department of Labor can do for your business," advises Josephine Mesta, president of the Northern Marianas SHRM Chapter, "and get your questions answered about the JVA system and other labor issues."

DeLeon Guerrero will provide an introduction to the CNMI labor regulation and its compliance requirements for CNMI employers. This program will be of special interest to all HR professionals and managers, refreshing employers' knowledge on the CNMI Labor regulations, the JVA system, and other employment issues.

This lunch meeting will be held at the Pacific Islands Club Charley's today, March 31, 2016, from 11:30am to 1:30pm.

This presentation is open to the public and will be an invaluable opportunity for employers and HR professionals and staff to better understand the CNMI Department of Labor JVA system and other employment requirements. Secretary Deleon Guerrero will provide an opportunity for questions.

The presentation includes the PIC lunch buffet at the cost of $20 for SHRM members and $30 for non-members. Seats are limited, so reserve seating by contacting Pina Deleon Guerrero by e-mail at pinadlg.shrm@gmail.com or by texting 285-7462 or Penny Jones by e-mail at penny.jones@hyattsaipan.com or by telephone at 323-5868.

SHRM is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. It serves the needs of HR professionals and advances the interests of the HR profession. Founded in 1948, SHRM has more than 250,000 members in over 140 countries, and more than 575 affiliated chapters. The NMI Chapter is affiliated with the national organization. For more information about the NMI Chapter, you can visit their website at http://nmichapter.shrm.org. ***(PR)***

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$66.95 Cookinex Electric Meat Grinder

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Essential Home Carlisle 70" Round Table Cloth $8.95

Hefty 66 Quart Storage Solution $14.95

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Essential Home Lift Top Ottoman Storage $145.95

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Craftsman 56 Piece Universal Tool Set $85.95

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Telebrands Hurricane Spin Mop 360 Degree $45.95

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Business

ADB says Asia economy to grow 5.7 percent in 2016 and 2017

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Softer growth prospects for China and a weak recovery in major industrial economies are expected to push down economic growth in developing Asia to 5.7 percent in 2016 and 2017, below previous projections, according to an Asian Development Bank report released Wednesday. The region's economy grew 5.9 percent in 2015.

The Asian Development Outlook 2016 said China's economic growth is seen moderating to 6.5 percent this year from 6.9 percent last year and to 6.3 percent next year. Slower exports, a falling labor supply and supply-side reforms are reshaping the world's second-largest economy toward more domestic consumption and a further reduction in excess industrial capacity, it said.

The report says India will remain one of the fastest-growing major economies, expanding by 7.4 percent in 2016 and 7.8 percent in 2017. Last year, India's economy grew 7.6 percent, with strong public investment boosting growth.

Southeast Asia's economy is set for stronger growth at 4.5 percent this year and 4.8 percent next year, up from 4.4 percent in 2015. The region will be led by its biggest economy, Indonesia, as it ramps up investment in infrastructure and implements policy reforms to spur private investment.

"(China's) growth moderation and uneven global recovery are weighing down overall growth in Asia," said Shang-Jin Wei, ADB's chief economist. "Despite these pressures, the region will continue to contribute over 60 percent of total global growth."

He urged countries across Asia to implement reforms to boost productivity, invest in under-supplied infrastructure, and follow sound macroeconomic management to increase growth potential and insulate them from global instability.

Aggregate growth in the United States, the euro area and Japan will stay at 1.8 percent in 2016 and inch up to 1.9 percent in 2017, the report said.

Apple remains in dark on how FBI hacked iPhone without help

WASHINGTON (AP)—The FBI's announcement that it mysteriously hacked into an iPhone is a public setback for Apple Inc., as consumers suddenly discover they can't keep their most personal information safe. Meanwhile, Apple remains in the dark about how to restore the security of its flagship product.

The government said it was able to break into an iPhone used by a gunman in a mass shooting in California, but it didn't say how. That puzzled Apple software engineers—and outside experts—about how the FBI broke the digital locks on the phone without Apple's help. It also complicated Apple's job repairing flaws that jeopardize its software.

The Justice Department's announcement that it was dropping a legal fight to compel Apple to help it access the phone also took away any obvious legal avenues Apple might have used to learn how the FBI did it.

Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym vacated her Feb. 16 order, which compelled Apple to help the FBI hack their phone, on Tuesday.

The Justice Department declined through a spokeswoman to comment Tuesday.

A few clues have emerged. A senior law enforcement official told The Associated Press that the FBI managed to defeat an Apple security feature that threatened to delete the phone's contents if the FBI failed to enter the correct passcode combination after 10 tries. That allowed the government to repeatedly and continuously test passcodes in what's known as a brute-force attack until the right code is entered and the phone is unlocked.

It wasn't clear how the FBI dealt with a related Apple security feature that introduces increasing time delays between guesses. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because this person was not authorized to discuss the technique publicly.

FBI Director James Comey has said with those features removed, the FBI could break into the phone in 26 minutes.

The FBI hacked into the iPhone used by gunman Syed Farook, who died with his wife in a gun battle with police after they killed 14 people in December in San Bernardino. The iPhone, issued to Farook by his employer, the county health department, was found in a vehicle the day after the shooting.

Yellen stresses that Fed foresees gradual pace of rate hikes

NEW YORK (AP)—Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen said Tuesday that the Fed still envisions only a gradual pace of interest rate increases in light of global pressures that could affect the U.S. economy.

Her comments spurred a rally on Wall Street, with the Dow Jones industrial average closing at its highest level this year.

Yellen didn't specify a timetable for further hikes to follow the Fed's rate increase in December from record lows. She said risks to the United States appear limited but cautioned that that assessment is subject to "considerable uncertainty."

Speaking to the Economic Club of New York, Yellen said the central bank is monitoring a global economic slump, sharply lower oil prices and stock market turbulence, which she said have hurt some U.S. consumers and key sectors such as manufacturing.

Singling out Chinathe world's second-largest economy, after the United StatesYellen noted widespread uncertainty over how well Beijing will manage a delicate slowdown in coming years.

She said that because foreign economic growth seems to have further weakened this year, the Fed will "proceed cautiously" in raising rates.

In light of her comments, most economists expect no hike at the Fed's next policy meetingApril 26-27despite remarks last week from other Fed officials that had raised the possibility of a rate increase then.

Investors welcomed Yellen's message that the Fed would move slowly in raising rates. The Dow surged nearly 98 points, or 0.6 percent. And the yield on the 10-year Treasury note sank to 1.80 percent from 1.89 percent.

"Despite a growing chorus of calls from even centrist-leaning officials to resume raising policy rates, Chair Yellen stuck to the dovish script of the March meeting statement," when the Fed expressed concerns about the global economy and kept rates unchanged, said Sal Guatieri, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets.

Nation

Trump rescinds his pledge to back GOP nominee; Walker backs Cruz

BROOKFIELD, Wis. (AP)—Donald Trump, turning his focus to Wisconsin even as another controversy cast a shadow over his campaign, said Tuesday he will no longer honor his pledge to support the eventual Republican pick for president. And his two Republican rivals, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and Ohio Gov. John Kasich, also refused to say they would support Trump or whoever is the nominee.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump reacts as he leaves a campaign stop Tuesday, March 29, 2016, in Janesville, Wis. AP

All three Republicans appeared at a CNN town hall in Milwaukee one week before Wisconsin's April 5 primary. Both Democratic candidates, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, also campaigned in the state.

Trump said he was rescinding his promise to back the GOP nominee because "I have been treated very unfairly." He listed the Republican National Committee, the Republican Party and party establishment among those he believes have wronged him.

Kasich and Cruz also refused to say whether they would stand by the pledge.

"If the nominee is somebody I think is really hurting the country, and dividing the country, I can't stand behind them," Kasich said. Cruz refused to commit to backing Trump, saying if he were the nominee it would hand the election to Clinton.

Mom delays cancer care to protect baby she says saved her

TONAWANDA, N.Y. (AP)—For Kim Vaillancourt, pregnant while staving off aggressive brain cancer, it comes down to this: "The baby saved me. Now it's my turn to save him."

Vaillancourt was diagnosed with glioblastoma after going to the hospital for headaches and nausea that came on over Christmas. Were it not for concern for the boy she's carrying, she and her husband, Phil, said it was a life-saving trip she would not have made.

They believe the unexpected pregnancy was heaven-sent.

Kim had surgery to remove the tumors, but now, to give the baby they've named Wyatt Eli the same chance he gave her, she is postponing any follow-up chemotherapy and radiation to avoid threatening her developing child.

"She's going to do what she can to save the baby's life and give it the healthiest life possible," Phil Vaillancourt said.

It had already been an eventful time in the Vaillancourt home in the Buffalo suburb of Tonawanda. The couple and their 11- and 12-year-old children had spent Dec. 23 in Erie County Family Court for an adoption ceremony that made three sisters- ages 6, 7 and 10—the couple had been fostering permanent members of their family.

With five kids on break from school, Kim wouldn't normally have made a fuss about feeling ill.

"I would have just thought I had a headache and the flu and I would have laid in bed," the 36-year-old mother said. But since she was about halfway through her pregnancy and worried that being unable to keep food down was keeping the baby from getting the nourishment he needed, she headed to the hospital to be checked.

Soon she would be rushed into surgery to remove two tumors that doctors said could have killed her. One had grown on the front of her brain. The other was dangerously close to her brain stem in the back.

ACROSS THE NATION

Alaska volcano spews smaller amounts of ash at lower levels

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—An Alaska volcano kept pumping out new ash Tuesday that could threaten aircraft, but it came in smaller amounts at lower heights, according to the Alaska Volcano Observatory. Pavlof Volcano, 625 miles southwest of Anchorage on the Alaska Peninsula, erupted Sunday. The initial eruption continued for about 17 hours and put out an ash cloud that reached 37,000 feet. The plume blew northeast and by Tuesday had reached Canada, but Dave Schneider, a U.S. Geological Survey geophysicist at the observatory, said activity had calmed from the continuous eruptive phase. "Over the last six to eight hours the activity is more intermittent," he said. "There are short duration, small explosive events that are occurring, as opposed to sort of a continuous plume."

Archaeologists digging at Malcolm X's boyhood home in Boston

BOSTON (AP)—Archeologists are digging at a boyhood home of Malcolm X in an effort to uncover more about the slain black rights activist's early life as well as the property's long history, which possibly includes Native American settlement. The two-week archaeological dig began Tuesday outside a two-and-a-half story home in Boston's historically black Roxbury neighborhood that was built in 1874. City Archaeologist Joseph Bagley said his office chose to dig up the site because it's likely that work will be needed soon to shore up the foundation of the vacant and run down structure. "This is kind of a now-or-never dig," he said. "If we don't do this, the site will be destroyed. We can't afford to wait."

Asia

Htin Kyaw sworn in as Myanmar's president

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP)—Htin Kyaw, a confidante of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, was sworn in Wednesday as Myanmar's president, ushering in the first democratically elected government into office after decades of military rule.

The 70-year-old Htin Kyaw took the oath of office in a joint session of Myanmar's newly elected parliament with his two vice presidents at his side, as Suu Kyi sat watching in the front row.

"I, Htin Kyaw, will be loyal to the union and the people of the union," he said, reading from a written pledge, while repeating after the house speaker Mann Win Khaing Than. "I will respect this constitution and the laws of the nation."

The same pledge was simultaneously read by First Vice President Myint Swe and Second Vice President Henry Van Tio. Later in the day, outgoing President Thein Sein will formally hand over the presidency to Htin Kyaw.

AP

Htin Kyaw, second right, takes oaths as Myanmar's new president during a sworn-in ceremony in Myanmar's parliament in Naypyitaw, Myanmar, Wednesday, March 30, 2016.

Rightfully, the job belonged to Suu Kyi, who has been the face of the pro-democracy movement and who endured decades of house arrest and harassment by military rulers without ever giving up on her non-violent campaign to unseat them. But a constitutional provision barred Suu Kyi from becoming president, and she made it clear that whoever sits in that chair will be her proxy. She has said repeatedly she will run the government from behind the scenes.

Still, Htin Kyaw will be remembered by history as the first civilian president for Myanmar and the head of its first government to be elected in free and fair polls. Suu Kyi's party, the National League for Democracy, won a landslide victory in elections last November, in a reflection of Suu Kyi's widespread public support.

Part of stolen Bangladeshi funds still in Philippine casinos

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—About $7.8 million out of $81 million stolen from Bangladesh's central bank and sent to fake bank accounts in the Philippines remains in local casinos and may still be recovered, the Philippine Senate heard in testimony Tuesday.«

Kam Sin Wong, a Chinese junket operator known in the Philippines as Kim Wong, told the hearing that the $81 million was remitted by two casino junket agents and gamblers including a Beijing resident named Gao Shuhua whom he has known for eight years and a Macau resident named Ding Zhize he just met in February.

The laundering of the stolen money in the Philippines has added pressure on the Southeast Asian country to close loopholes in its financial system.

Wong volunteered to return $4.63 million that remains in a junket account in Solaire Resort and Casino, and another 40 million pesos ($863,000) still in Midas Hotel casino under the account of his company, Eastern Hawaii Leisure Co.

Silverio Benny Tan, corporate secretary of Solaire's operator, Bloomberry Resorts Corp., told the hearing the casino has frozen 108.67 million pesos ($2.33 million) worth of chips and money in different denominations confiscated from the gamblers when the bank heist issue came to light.

Wong alleged $17 million is still with remittance company Philrem, which the company owners denied during the hearing. Wong said Gao also paid him 450 million pesos ($9.71 million) for a loan that covered Gao's losses in an earlier gambling spree in the country. He said if compelled to do so, he can also return that money.

Casino operators and government regulators said it may be difficult to account for the rest of the money, which was used at gambling tables. Wong said $370,000 in cash was withdrawn by the casino junket agents in violation of their agreement that all the money would remain in the casino accounts.

South Korea says North Korea fired short-range projectile

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea fired a short-range projectile from an area near its eastern coast on Tuesday, South Korean officials said, in what appears to be another weapons test seen as a response to ongoing military drills between Washington and Seoul.

The projectile was fired near the North Korean port city of Wonsan and flew about 200 kilometers (125 miles) before crashing into land northeast of the launch site, South Korean military officials said.

It was unclear whether the projectile was a ballistic missile or an artillery shell, said a Joint Chiefs of Staff official who didn't want to be identified, citing office rules. It was too early to tell whether North Korea used a land target to test the accuracy and range of its weapons or experienced problems after planning a launch into the sea, said an official from Seoul's Defense Ministry, who also didn't want to be named because of department rules.

North Korea has fired a slew of short-range missiles and artillery shells into the sea and has threatened nuclear strikes on Washington and Seoul since the start on March 7 of the annual springtime war games between the United States and South Korea.

North Korea also launched a medium-range ballistic missile into waters off its east coast for the first time since 2014 and touted a new artillery system it says could turn the South Korean capital of Seoul into a "sea of flames." Experts say the North's new artillery launchers can fire 300-millimeter shells up to 200 kilometers (125 miles), theoretically reaching Seoul and its surrounding metropolitan area, where nearly half of the 50 million South Koreans live.

World

Hijack drama ends in Cyprus with arrest of 'unstable' man

LARNACA, Cyprus (AP)—A man described as "psychologically unstable" hijacked a flight Tuesday from Egypt to Cyprus and threatened to blow it up. His explosives turned out to be fake, and he surrendered with all passengers released unharmed after a bizarre six-hour standoff.

As more became known about the motive of the 59-year-old Egyptian who was taken into custody, authorities characterized the commandeering of the EgyptAir jetliner not as an act of terrorism but more like a "family feud" with his former wife.

The aviation drama ended peacefully on the tarmac of Larnaca airport on the island nation's southern coast with the surrender of a man identified by Cypriot and Egyptian authorities as Seif Eddin Mustafa.

The incident was likely to renew concerns about Egyptian airport security months after a Russian passenger plane was blown out of the sky over the Sinai Peninsula in a bombing claimed by the Islamic State group.

But Egyptian officials stressed that their security measures were not to blame, and there was praise for the EgyptAir flight crew. Pilot Amr Gamal told The Associated Press: "We rescued all the people and the man got arrested."

EgyptAir Flight 181 took off from the Mediterranean coastal city of Alexandria for a 30-minute hop to Cairo with at least 72 people aboard, Cyprus police said, including about two dozen foreigners.

At some point, the hijacker claimed to have explosives in his belt and forced the pilot to fly the Airbus 320 to Cyprus, Egyptian authorities said.

Egyptian passenger Farah el-Dabani told the Dubai-based Al-Arabiyah TV network that the hijacker was seated in the back of the aircraft and that it was the crew who told passengers that the plane was being hijacked.

"There was panic at the beginning, but the crew told us to be quiet. They did a good job to keep us all quiet so the hijacker does not do anything rash," she said in a telephone interview.

After the jet landed in Larnaca about 9 a.m., the hijacker asked to speak to his Cypriot ex-wife, who was brought to the airport, and he sent out a letter from the aircraft to give to her, said Cypriot Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides.

Syria's Assad tries to polish image with Palmyra's recapture

BEIRUT (AP)—The recapture of Palmyra in central Syria from Islamic State militants puts government forces at the heart of the fight against the jihadist group - and not just geographically speaking.

For President Bashar Assad, recapturing the historic town represents a strategic political coup through which he hopes to convince the West that the Syrian army is a credible partner in combatting terrorism as it ramps up the fight against Islamic State.

It is an awkward argument that the U.S. has repeatedly rebuffed. Officials in Washington are quick to point out that it was Assad's brutal crackdown on his own people that created the kind of vacuum that allowed extremists like IS to flourish in the first place.

An alliance between the U.S.-led coalition fighting IS - similar to the assistance and training provided to the Iraqi military on the other front in the war - seems out of the question.

But with the international focus now on fighting the Islamic State group - and a partial cease-fire in place to facilitate that - there appears to be tacit U.S. approval for at least this part of Assad's offensive in Syria to continue. If that is seen to develop, it could help the authoritarian ruler survive a ruinous 5-year-old conflict that has seen half the country's population displaced.

The desert town of Palmyra, with its 2,000-year-old ruins, is an archaeological gem and a cherished landmark known endearingly to Syrians as the "Bride of the Desert." It is also a strategic crossroads linking the Syrian capital, Damascus, with the country's east and the border with Iraq.

WORLD BRIEFS

WHO: Ebola no longer world health emergency

DAKAR, Senegal (AP)—The World Health Organization said Tuesday that the Ebola outbreak in West Africa no longer qualifies as an international health emergency, although it cautioned that male survivors can infect their sexual partners for up to a year after recovering. The decision by WHO's Ebola emergency committee comes following flare-ups that emerged in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone after authorities declared virus transmission over. The new cases sometimes were publicized only hours after the public announcements were made. "Complacency at this stage would be completely wrong," said Robert Steffen, the committee's vice chair. The announcement puts an end to the international emergency declaration that has been controversial. An Associated Press investigation found that WHO initially delayed making the declaration—similar to an SOS signal—on political, economic and religious grounds.

Nigerian official: Surrendered bomber not a "Chibok girl"

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP)—A Nigerian official says a girl suicide bomber who surrendered in Cameroon is not one of the 276 schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram from a school in the northeast Nigerian town of Chibok nearly two years ago, but is from a nearby community. The official says Cameroonian authorities gave them the names of the girl and an older accomplice but are holding them for questioning about how the Islamic extremists operate. The official in Yaounde, the Cameroonian capital, is waiting for the girls to be handed over. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the press on the sensitive matter. The girl, who turned herself in on Friday with explosives strapped to her body, appeared to be heavily drugged and suffering injuries, Cameroonian officials said. She said she was from Chibok and appeared to be about 10 years old.

Focus

Mattel fought elusive cyber-thieves to get $3M out of China

ERIKA KINETZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WENZHOU, China (AP)—The email seemed unremarkable: a routine request by Mattel Inc.'s chief executive for a new vendor payment to China.

It was well-timed, arriving on Thursday, April 30, during a tumultuous period for the Los-Angeles based maker of Barbie dolls. Barbie was bombing, particularly overseas, and the CEO, Christopher Sinclair, had officially taken over only that month. Mattel had fired his predecessor.

The finance executive who got the note was naturally eager to please her new boss. She double-checked protocol. Fund transfers required approval from two high-ranking managers. She qualified and so did the CEO, according to a person familiar with the investigation who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak about the matter. He declined to reveal the finance executive's name.

Satisfied, the executive wired over $3 million to the Bank of Wenzhou, in China.

Hours later, she mentioned the payment to Sinclair.

But he hadn't made any such request.

Frantic, Mattel executives called their U.S. bank, the police and the FBI.

The response? You're out of luck. The money's already in China.

Mattel's millions were swept up in a tide of dirty money that passes through China and that Western police are only beginning to understand. The scam the company fell victim to—known as the fake CEO or fake president scam—has cost companies, many of them American, over $1.8 billion, according to the FBI. Most of the stolen money passes through banks in China or Hong Kong, the FBI said.

An Associated Press investigation this week showed that China is emerging as a global hub for money laundering. The dark money that courses through China has long been considered a domestic issue, with Chinese illicitly moving money for other Chinese. That's no longer the case. Mounting evidence indicates that China is becoming a global banker for the criminal economy, according to interviews with police officials, court records in the U.S. and Europe, and intelligence documents reviewed by the AP.

AP

In this March 6, 2009, file photo, children play at the "House of Barbie" in Shanghai, China. In 2009, Mattel opened the flagship Barbie store but closed it after just two years.

Years of mutual mistrust have hindered law enforcement cooperation between China and the West, adding to China's appeal as a money laundering hub. The U.S. State Department said in a report this month that China has "not cooperated sufficiently on financial investigations." China's inability to enforce U.S. court orders on China-based assets "remains a significant barrier to enhanced U.S.-China cooperation," it added.

In a regular briefing with reporters Monday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said that the government "places great emphasis" on fighting crimes such as money laundering and is working to expand international cooperation. "China is not, has not been, nor will be in the future a center of global money laundering," he said.

Mattel wasn't going to let go of $3 million without a fight. What the company really needed was luck. And when it came to Mattel's China operations, luck had been in short supply.

Mattel's misadventures in China are so spectacular they've become the stuff of business school seminars. In 2007, Mattel recalled 19 million made-in-China toys, including Pixar cars covered in lead paint and Barbie sets embedded with tiny, hazardous magnets. Then, in 2009, Mattel opened the "House of Barbie," a glowing pink, six-story shrine on one of Shanghai's ritziest shopping boulevards. It had a spiral staircase encased with over 800 Barbie dolls, a spa and a fashion runway. But the flagship flopped, and Mattel closed it after just two years.

Rising costs and labor shortages weighed on China production, even as the $5.7 billion toy giant limped back into the Chinese market with dolls—including a Violin Soloist Barbie—aimed at Chinese "tiger moms."

The thieves struck as Mattel was aggressively pushing its China business, positioning itself as a child development brand, which helped grow China sales 43 percent in 2015 over the prior year. They had done their homework, mining social media and likely hacking corporate emails to penetrate Mattel's corporate hierarchy and payment patterns, according to the person familiar with the investigation.

The criminals had the $3 million sent to Wenzhou, a gritty enclave on China's eastern coast that is emerging as a significant transit point in global money laundering networks. The city is the destination for 90 percent of the funds stolen through fake CEO scams in Europe, according to an intelligence memo reviewed by the AP.

Wenzhou city officials declined to comment.

Squeezed by mountains against the sea, Wenzhou is known as the birthplace of underground finance in China.

Decades of official neglect allowed an unusual, business-oriented culture to thrive here. After Mao's anti-capitalist rule, a private economy began to re-emerge in Wenzhou in the late 1970s. But those first peasant entrepreneurs—and the informal financing mechanisms that sprang up around them—inhabited a legal gray zone, said Chen Zongshi, an assistant sociology professor at Zhejiang University. It would be a decade before Wenzhou was officially authorized to develop private enterprise, according to Zongshi. Those regulations were among the first in China.

Poverty, underdevelopment and a lack of arable land also made Wenzhou an ideal place to leave. Strivers heading for Europe and North America poured out of Wenzhou, and in their wake, the informal financial systems that served the area's entrepreneurs went global.

Today, money that ends up in Wenzhou doesn't have to stay there—thanks in part to the pawn shops and corner grocery stores that quietly double as money-transfer agents, said Yan Lixin, the secretary general of the China Center for Anti-Money Laundering Studies at Shanghai's Fudan University.

"From Wenzhou, the money could scatter to any other place," he said.

Luck arrived for Mattel in the form of a bank holiday. Friday, May 1, was Labor Day in China.

That, crucially, gave Mattel time. The company notified Chinese police, who quickly launched a criminal investigation, according to a letter from Mattel thanking Chinese authorities, which was obtained by the AP.

When the Bank of Wenzhou opened the following Monday, a China-based anti-fraud executive from Mattel strode past the sculpted lions that flank the entrance to the bank's headquarters, marched upstairs to the International Business Department and presented a letter from the FBI, according to two people familiar with the investigation who were not authorized to speak publicly.

Chinese police froze the account that very morning. Two days later, on May 6, Mattel got its money back, according to the letter.

Mattel wrote that the Wenzhou police "showed a great sense of responsibility and enforcement capability."

"We hereby reiterate our appreciation," Mattel wrote. "We also hope that this case can pave the way for future international cooperation in fighting similar transnational crimes."

International cooperation has grown in importance for Beijing. China's ruling Communist Party is campaigning to purge corruption from its ranks, pursuing officials who have fled overseas with ill-gotten wealth, in an effort to shore up its legitimacy as China's economy slows.

"If we need help getting corrupt officials or bribes back, we need to offer assistance when other countries need it too," said Huang Feng, Director of the Institute for International Criminal Law at Beijing Normal University. "The problem is not that the Chinese authorities have been uncooperative, it's that we don't have a relevant legal framework to implement."

He said Mattel fought the fraud correctly, imploring Chinese authorities to use Chinese law to get the money back.

The Bank of Wenzhou confirmed that its staff handled Mattel's case but declined to comment. Police in Wenzhou confirmed that an investigation was ongoing but declined to discuss details. Mattel also declined to comment for this story, citing the ongoing investigation.

Since its near miss in Wenzhou, Mattel has tracked a dozen more attempted hacks.

It's still not clear who was behind the scam.

Environment

Nevada power plant first in world with solar-geothermal mix

AP

Italian Premier Matteo Renzi, his wife, Agnese, Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval, right, and Enel CEO Francesco Starace prepare for a tour of the Enel Green Power North America's Stillwater hybrid power plant near Fallon, Nev., on Tuesday, March 29, 2016.

By SCOTT SONNER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

STILLWATER, Nev. (AP)—Nevada's governor, the premier of Italy and the director of the U.S. Energy Department's renewable energy labs on Tuesday formally dedicated the final piece of the only hybrid power plant in the world producing renewable energy by combining geothermal with two kinds of solar power.

The Stillwater Hybrid Power Plant built by a U.S. subsidiary of an Italian company produces energy more efficiently through a complementary operation that relies on solar panels and a new solar thermal operation on the sunniest and hottest days when geothermal production is lower than average, company officials said.

"The lessons we are learning at this advanced geothermal-solar facility will be key to the development of other hybrid plants throughout the world," said Francesco Starace, CEO of the Rome-based Enel.

Marin Keller, director of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, said the cutting-edge technology is one of the "underpinnings of the future of clean energy." He said it will help the U.S. government meet commitments it outlined at climate talks in Paris in November to "dramatically accelerate the pace of energy technology innovation."

Enel Green Power North America Inc. built the original geothermal plant between the rural farming community of Fallon and the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge 75 miles east of Reno in 2009. The photovoltaic component powered by solar panels was added in 2012. The new solar thermal system, which produces energy from heat, rather than light, began operation last year.

Gov. Brian Sandoval said it's fitting that the "one-of-a-kind-on-the-planet" facility was built in Nevada, the nation's leader in per-capita production of both geothermal and solar power. Only California produces more geothermal energy overall.

"What oil is to Texas, geothermal is to Nevada," said Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev.

Italy was the site of the first geothermal experiment a century ago that established the potential to harness renewable energy produced by the steam from hot water beneath the ground.

"The future of energy is technology," Italian Premier Matteo Renzi said at Tuesday's dedication and ribbon-cutting, one of four stops he plans during a U.S. tour that includes visits to Chicago, Boston and Washington. "If we invest in technology, we can create a different world, a new world."

EPA's mileage mandate means drivers save big

By MICHAEL E. KRAFT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

In 2010 and again in 2012, the Obama administration negotiated agreements with auto companies on new fuel economy standards.

Passenger vehicles were to get an average of 34.5 miles per gallon by the model year 2016 and 54.5 mpg by 2025. The rules also set greenhouse gas emission limits for cars, trucks and SUVs.

Anyone who has driven a newer vehicle cannot help but notice the improved fuel economy. It represents the biggest jump in federal efficiency standards since their introduction in 1975. Yet the value of the rules could be greatly diminished if consumers maintain their current preference for SUVs and light trucks over cars.

Presumably, buyers' decisions reflect currently low gasoline prices as well as an improving economy. And why should buyers change given minimal incentives to choose more efficient vehicles?

Adopting a carbon tax or raising gas taxes to pay for much needed highway and related infrastructure improvements could provide a big incentive to conserve fuel.

That said, are the new fuel economy and greenhouse gas emission rules a good deal for us?

Yes, they are, although analysts differ in how they estimate the impacts. To get the fullest picture, we should include both direct financial gain from improved fuel economy and indirect benefits related to climate change and improved air quality.

The direct financial gain for new car buyers depends on the cost of gasoline and the anticipated rise in the cost of new vehicles attributable to the higher fuel economy standards. We don't know the latter precisely. Much depends on how auto companies alter vehicle designs and which technologies they employ.

In its most recent analysis, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that the buyer of a 2016 car will save $3,000 over its lifetime. The anticipated savings are even greater for a 2025 car, about $10,000.

In short, the EPA says the new standards generate far more savings to consumers than they will cost. These estimates are for those paying cash for a car, but there are substantial savings as well for those who finance a vehicle.

What about indirect benefits of the rules? Improved fuel economy also translates into gains in public health, reduction in the risk of climate change, and improved energy security related to lowering the nation's dependence on imported oil.

All of these benefits are substantial, particularly the public health impacts for those suffering from lung diseases such as asthma — 23 million people, or over 7 percent of the population.

The agencies' regulatory impact analysis for the 2016 model year standards puts the monetized or measurable benefits at nearly five times the costs, or $240 billion in benefits compared to $52 billion in costs.

The benefits for the 2017 through 2025 model years are about three times the anticipated costs even when many benefits were not taken into account at all or were not fully measured.

There are additional gains from the new rules that often are ignored. For example, the standards encourage automakers to innovate and invest in new technologies that may well make the U.S. more economically competitive and resilient in a shifting and uncertain global economy.

How the rules were developed is also important. They were adopted only after extensive consultation with the auto industry, auto workers, consumer groups, environmental and energy experts, and state governments.

Thirteen major automakers supported the initiative to develop a consistent nationwide standard and create regulatory certainty going forward. In addition, the agencies continue to work with auto companies on many details of how the rules will be applied.

We are well on our way to a far brighter future in vehicle efficiency. We should recognize the enormous value of the new standards and strongly encourage automakers to do even better in developing new transportation technologies.

Developing world overtakes West in renewables investments

STOCKHOLM (AP)—A U.N.-backed report says global investments in solar, wind and other sources of renewable energy reached a record $286 billion last year. For the first time the developing world accounted for the majority.

The United Nations Environment Program on Thursday said renewable investments in developing countries jumped 19 percent to $156 billion in 2015, with $103 billion in China alone.

U.S. investments rose 19 percent to $44 billion but, overall, investments in developed countries fell 8 percent to $130 billion.

Despite higher investments, renewables accounted for only one-tenth of global power generation, most of which comes from coal and natural gas.

The renewable figures were based on data from Bloomberg New Energy Finance and excluded large-scale hydropower projects, which are often criticized by environmentalists for disrupting wildlife and river flows.

AP

In this file photo dated Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2015, wind turbines in Penonome, Panama, as the Central American country seeks to gradually reduce its dependence on fossil fuels.

Life & Style

Oscar-winning actress Patty Duke dies at 69

NEW YORK (AP)—Patty Duke, who as a teen won an Oscar for playing Helen Keller in "The Miracle Worker," then maintained a long career while battling personal demons, has died at the age of 69.

The actress died early Tuesday morning of sepsis from a ruptured intestine, according to her agent, Mitchell Stubbs. She died in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, where she had lived for the past quarter-century, according to Teri Weigel, the publicist for her son, actor Sean Astin.

Duke astonished audiences as the young deaf-and-blind Keller first on Broadway, then in the acclaimed 1962 film version, appearing in both alongside Anne Bancroft as Helen's teacher, Annie Sullivan (who won an Oscar of her own).

Then in 1963, Duke burst on the TV scene starring in her own sitcom, "The Patty Duke Show," which aired for three seasons. She played dual roles as identical cousins Cathy, "who's lived most everywhere, from Zanzibar to Barclay Square" while (according to the theme song) "Patty's only seen the sights a girl can see from Brooklyn Heights. What a crazy pair!"

In 2015, she would play twin roles again: as a pair of grandmas on an episode of "Liv and Maddie," a series on the Disney Channel.

"We're so grateful to her for living a life that generates that amount of compassion and feeling in others," Astin told The Associated Press in reflecting on the outpouring of sentiment from fans at the news of her death.

She had "really, really suffered" with her illness, Astin added. From late last week until early Tuesday morning, he said, "was a really, really, really hard process. It was hard for her, it was hard for the people who love her to help her...."

But throughout her life, she was "a warrior," he said. "You watch this 4-foot-10, tiny imp of a lady who's more powerful than the greatest military leaders in history."

Born Anna Marie Duke in the New York borough of Queens on Dec. 14, 1946, she had a difficult childhood with abusive parents. By 8 years old she was largely under the control of husband-and-wife talent managers who kept her busy on soap operas and advertising displays.

In the meantime, they supplied her with alcohol and prescription drugs, which accentuated the effects of her undiagnosed bipolar disorder.

AP

In this March 23, 2010 file photo, Academy and Emmy award-winning actress, Patty Duke appears during a news conference at the Paley Center for Media in Beverly Hills, Calif.

In her 1988 memoir, "Call Me Anna," Duke wrote of her condition and the diagnosis she had gotten only six years earlier, and of the subsequent treatment that helped stabilize her life. The book became a 1990 TV film in which she starred, and she became an activist for mental health causes, helping to de-stigmatize bipolar disorder.

With the end of "The Patty Duke Show" in 1966, which left her stereotyped as not one, but two squeaky-clean teenagers, Duke attempted to leap into the nitty-grittiness of adulthood in the 1967 melodrama "Valley of the Dolls," in which she played a showbiz hopeful who falls prey to drug addiction, a broken marriage and shattered dreams.

The film, based on the best-selling Jacqueline Susann pulp novel, was critically slammed but a commercial sensation.

During her career she would win three Emmy Awards, for the TV film "My Sweet Charlie," the miniseries "Captains and the Kings" and the 1979 TV remake of "The Miracle Worker," in which Duke played Annie Sullivan with "Little House on the Prairie" actress Melissa Gilbert as Keller.

"I know she's in a better place. I will miss her every day but I will find comfort in the words of Helen Keller: 'The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched—they must be felt with the heart,'" Gilbert wrote in tribute.

In the 1980s, she starred in a trio of short-lived sitcoms: "It Takes Two," ''Karen's Song" and "Hail to the Chief," cast as the first female president of the United States.

"Her career ebbed and flowed," said Sean Astin, her son with her third husband, actor John Astin, "and sometimes she was stressed about it and sometimes she was at peace with it. And then she'd get to do something that she could sink her teeth into, that reminded her of what she was capable of."

In addition to her acting career, Duke served as the president of the Screen Actors Guild from 1985 to 1988.

She starred in several stage productions, including a return to Broadway in 2002 to play Aunt Eller in a revival of the musical "Oklahoma!"

By then, she already had spent a dozen years living in Idaho with her fourth husband, Michael Pearce (who survives her), seeking refuge from the clutter, noise and turmoil of big cities, and from the tumultuous life she had weathered in the past.

In describing the role of Aunt Eller, and perhaps herself, to The Associated Press, she said, "This is a woman who has had strife in life, made her peace with some of it and has come to the point of acceptance. Not giving up."

Son Sean Astin remembers mother Patty Duke, 'a warrior'

NEW YORK (AP)—After months of seeing his mother in pain and holding her hand when she died, Sean Astin turned his mourning over Patty Duke's death Tuesday into a bit of celebration after he saw the flood of tributes in her honor.

"It's just such an affirmation of the best part of her and such a relief to be able to enjoy that as opposed to the pain that everyone was feeling," Astin said in a phone interview with The Associated Press, hours after his Oscar- and Emmy-winning mother died at age 69. "We're so grateful to her for living a life that generates that amount of compassion and feeling in others. So, this last hour's a joy moment for me."

Duke died from sepsis due to a ruptured intestine at a hospital in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, where she had lived for the last 25 years with husband Michael Pearce.

Astin, one of her three children, said she had dealt with a multitude of ailments over the years, including emphysema after years of smoking. The actor talked about her pain, her triumphs, and what her legacy might be, among other thoughts he shared about his famous mother.

AP

In this Aug. 17, 2004 file photo, Academy Award winner, and television actress Patty Duke poses with her sons, actors Mackenzie Astin, left, and Sean Astin after being honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in Los Angeles.

HER SICKNESS

"There was so much suffering. She really, really suffered in a way that -- we were desperate to help relieve her suffering, and so it's just a blessing that she's not suffering anymore.

"She had a lot of different things that she went through, a lot of different ailments. Several of them you thought, 'Oh, this is a dire one,' and then she would beat it.

"She talked a lot about her heart bypass, her heart surgery. Obviously her bipolar disorder was very public but she had a lot of things that were plaguing her and she finally got to a place where things were OK, and then this episode happened where her lower intestine basically ruptured and then there was septicemia. So she was alert and she was able to talk to the surgeons when she went in and that was a very good and healthy process. It was clear how serious it was. 'This is a very, very sick woman,' the doctor said and so everyone knew that it was a potentially fatal moment for her and she came out on the other side of the surgery ... So from Thursday until this morning at 1:20 a.m (it) was a really, really, really hard process. It was hard for her, it was hard for the people who love her to help her, it was hard for the professionals."

ON HER MARRIAGE:

"The true story of her life isn't her work and it isn't her advocacy, it's the love relationship she's had with her husband Mike for the last 30 years. ... He was a drill sergeant in the Army when they met and he became her 30-year project, and she finally in her life had a protector. And so she showed him the world and he took care of her and until this morning at 1:20 they were connected with a bond that is impossible to describe."

End of a TV era: 'American Idol' vows 'spectacular' finale

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"American Idol," which gave the world Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood and Jennifer Hudson, has one more chance to mint a star before it fades into TV and music history.

Whether viewers choose a future chart-topper or trivia question remains to be seen. But executive producer Nigel Lythgoe, who helped translate Britain's "Pop Idol" into the Fox version that debuted in 2002, said the farewell episode will be memorable.

"It's going to be a rather spectacular show," Lythgoe promised, with all the former winners on hand along with past contestants and "other surprises" in the two-hour finale.

"It's about the American idols, about reminding people of 15 seasons," he said, as well as giving the final winner his or her share of the spotlight.

The contenders for the title are finalists MacKenzie Bourg, 23, of Lafayette, Louisiana; Trent Harmon, 24, of Amory, Mississippi; La'Porsha Renae, 22, of McComb, Mississippi; and Dalton Rapattoni, 19, of Dallas.

The field will have been trimmed to three for the final competition episode, 8-9 p.m. EDT Wednesday, April 6, with the winner announced the next night, 8-10:06 p.m. EDT Thursday, April 7. Lythgoe, who exited the series in 2013, returned to produce the concluding night's broadcast.

Clarkson, the inaugural "Idol," is set to perform, as are Underwood and the other winners including Ruben Studdard, Fantasia, Jordin Sparks and Scotty McCreery. Among the many contestants

AP

n this Sept. 4, 2002 file photo, Kelly Clarkson, 20, of Burleson, Texas, sings "A Moment Like This," after winning in the final episode of the first season of Fox's television competition "American Idol," in Los Angeles.

taking part: Clay Aiken, Chris Daughtry, Katharine McPhee, Kellie Pickler, Elliott Yamin and LaToya London.

Past "Idol" finales became known for flaunting superstars, perhaps none more important than Prince. His performance in the 2006 season-ender signaled that the show had transcended its image as overblown karaoke and become a respectable showcase for established artists.

But Lythgoe downplays the importance of celebrities as part of the finale—or the contest itself.

"It isn't about big stars coming on and singing their record. 'American Idol' was never about that. It was about the young stars we created," he said.

Lythgoe can't avoid a bit of impish humor involving a certain pair of divas, former judges Mariah Carey and Nicki Minaj, who famously clashed during their shared 2013 tenure.

"I've invited them back to the finale to sing 'That's What Friends Are For,'" he said.

Current judges Harry Connick Jr., Jennifer Lopez and Keith Urban will help usher the show out.

Before the finale, Fox is stoking nostalgia with "American Idol: American Dream," a 90-minute special airing at 8 p.m. EDT Tuesday, April 5. Host Ryan Seacrest, original judges Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson and former contestants will be among those reminiscing and sharing insider tidbits.

Season seven contestant David Hernandez already is feeling a sense of loss.

"I only really associate great memories with being on that show," he said. While some others are reluctant to credit their careers to "Idol," he gladly admits it—and so, he points out, does one of the show's biggest graduates.

"Even to this day, when Carrie Underwood accepts her Grammys and other awards, she says, 'Thank you, 'American Idol,' this wouldn't be possible,'" Hernandez said. "I'm so thankful just to have fans in the Philippines or in Europe who say, 'I remember you on that show. I bought your album.'"

"Idol" was as much a boost for Fox as any of its young singers, ruling the TV ratings as the No. 1 series for an astounding nine consecutive years.

Lythgoe said he was confident that British mega-producer Simon Fuller's "Pop Idol" format, with its unusual behind-the-scenes view of contestant auditions, would export well. And he told Fox executives just that.

"You realize this program is going to take you across the board, from grandchildren to grandparents," Lythgoe recalled saying. "This was a family show at a time when family members were each disappearing into their own rooms to watch television."

Although he firmly believed in it, he said, "Simon Cowell packed his suitcase for two weeks."

While Cowell's barbed criticism of contestants helped drive the show's popularity, it also made for a rocky start with Abdul, who favored a more nurturing approach with the show's young talent.

Craig Sager in high spirits as he works Wizards-Warriors

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Craig Sager has a blood clot behind his right ear that is affecting his hearing, and that's just another annoyance he is accepting as he continues to work NBA games for Turner Sports with fervor despite his leukemia no longer being in remission.

Dealing with the clot, which Sager compared to swimmer's ear that won't subside, could cause him to bleed to death given his blood levels, he said.

Sager's spirits are undeterred by the latest challenge in his cancer fight, even if it meant a redeye flight after Tuesday's Wizards-Warriors game to get to a doctor's appointment in Houston on Wednesday morning before another game Thursday. His new reality includes twice-weekly blood work and regular transfusions, the latest done Monday in Atlanta before he flew West.

"Nice to be here, that's for sure," said Sager, who stood up and saluted Steve Kerr as the Warriors coach discussed the one-of-a-kind broadcaster before the game. "I always get here over three hours before tip. It's fun."

AP

In this March 5, 2015, file photo, Craig Sager acknowledges the crowd during a timeout of a game between the Chicago Bulls and the Oklahoma City Thunder in Chicago.

For the occasion of seeing the defending NBA champions, Sager purchased a new "Golden Gate Bridge" orange shirt and a bright tie that lists its 15 colors on the back. His Nike sneakers say "Mr. Fancy" inside the tongue of the left shoe and "Suits" on the right one.

"Excited to see him," Kerr said. "Thinking a lot about Sager and his family, and there he is. ... Fired up you're working the game, Sags."

Ending dog's suffering is difficult discussion for wife

DEAR ABBY: How do I talk to my husband about putting his dog "Sunny" to sleep? My husband is the most loving, caring, generous person I have ever met, and I don't know how to tell him it's time to let his best friend go.

Sunny is 15 1/2 years old and can barely walk because of bad hips. The poor thing can see only shadows and is almost completely deaf. He has been like this for the last two years and is deteriorating steadily.

I'm trying to be understanding and supportive. I bought reusable diapers when Sunny could no longer control his bowels and bladder. I carry him outside multiple times a day and hold him up so he can urinate without the diaper. I wash him regularly after he soils himself. It is very sad. I keep hoping he will pass on in his sleep so my husband won't have to make the call, but he is still clinging to life.

It is difficult to bring this up with my husband because he knows I'm frustrated with constantly cleaning up pee and poop and washing bedding after there has been an accident. I don't want him to think I want him to put the dog to sleep just because it is difficult. It's just TIME.

Sunny's quality of life is zero. The only thing he can do is eat and sleep. Is that enough? Am I wrong? What should I say to my husband to put the poor animal out of his misery?

IT'S TIME, IN RENO

DEAR IT'S TIME: Your husband is doing his best friend no favor by letting him linger this way. What's going on now isn't fair to Sunny or to you. You might point out that dogs were put on this earth to run and play and enjoy their lives, something that Sunny hasn't been able to do for a long time.

Suggest he contact Sunny's veterinarian and talk to him/her about his beloved dog's condition, because I'm pretty sure the vet will agree with me. Then be prepared, because your husband may be so bonded with Sunny that he will need grief counseling after his dog is no more.

DEAR READERS: A group of distinguished psychiatrists, the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry (GAP), needs help from some of you. They need feedback from gay, bisexual or transgender people, many of whom have experienced conflicts with their faith because of who they are attracted to or their gender identity. Many, while attempting "conversion" treatment, experienced great emotional distress, but never considered consulting a mental health professional because they had been discouraged from doing so by their faith community. Knowing the struggles you have experienced could benefit individuals who need help and haven't gotten it. Your input is important. It will give GAP psychiatrists a broader representation of people than they could get from any other source.

Thank you in advance for taking part in this important study. The Internet address to send your comments is mary.barber@omh.ny.gov. For those who don't have email access, GAP's mailing address is: P.O. Box 570218, Dallas, TX 75357-0218. In the past, readers have been generous in "telling it like it is," and I hope you will continue because your experiences are important. Your participation may help to effect positive changes in the treatment of patients.

LOVE, ABBY

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

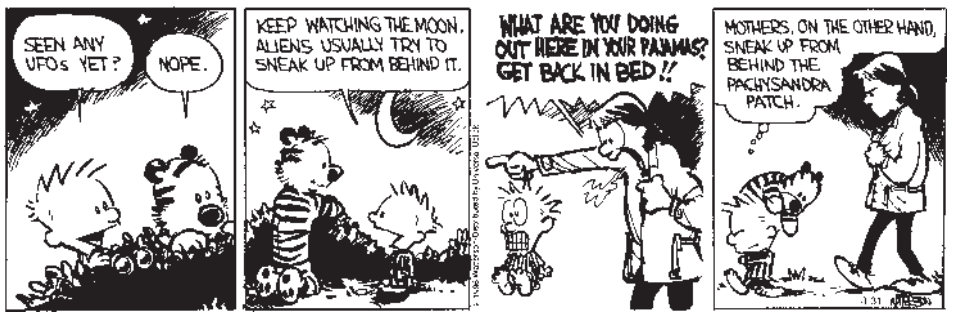
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

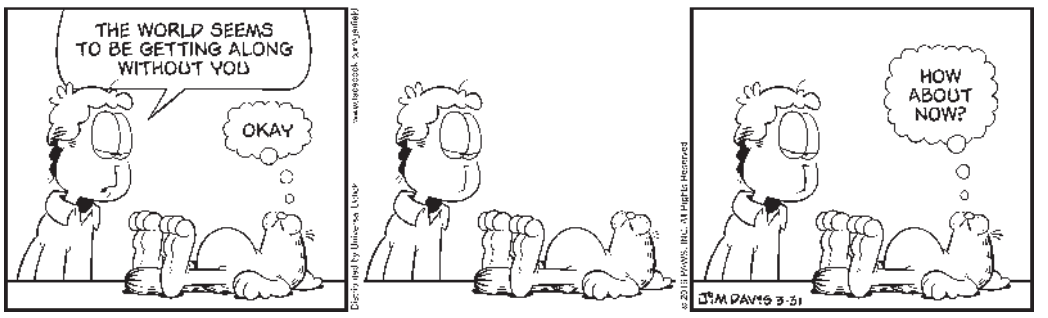
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


SEEN ANY UFOs YET?
NOPE.
KEEP WATCHING THE MOON, ALIENS USUALLY TRY TO SNEAK UP FROM BEHIND IT.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE IN YOUR PAJAMAS? GET BACK IN BED!!
MOTHERS, ON THE OTHER HAND, SNEAK UP FROM BEHIND THE PACHYSANDRA PATCH.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



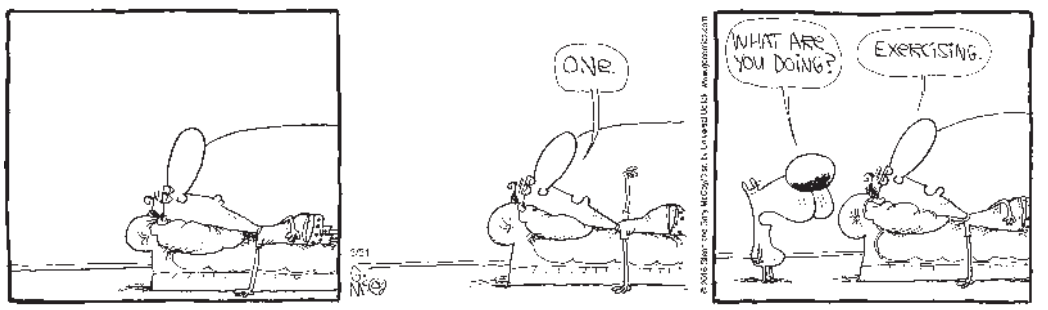
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

TOMORROW IS APRIL FOOLS' DAY. I HAVE TO BE VIGILANT.
IF I LET MY GUARD DOWN FOR A MINUTE, SOMEBODY'LL TRY TO PRANK ME.
REMEMBER LAST YEAR WHEN ANDRE SAID HE HIT MY CAR?
THAT WASN'T... HE REALLY DID HIT YOUR CAR.
OH, I KNOW. HE REALLY COMMITTED TO THAT ONE.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

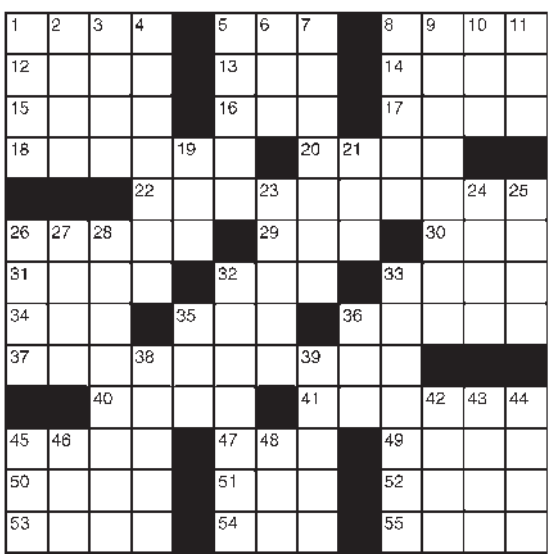
ACROSS
1 Huffed and puffed
5 Sleuth
8 Scored 100 on
12 Swear-word
13 Bikini half
14 Cast a ballot
15 Voice in an iPhone
16 Feedbag tidbit
17 Volunteer's words
18 Greek islander
20 Hunt for
22 "Blithe Spirit" writer
26 Painter's stand
29 Small batteries
30 Eastern "way"
31 Satiate
32 Press for payment
33 Slay
34 TV's Romano
35 Dress (up)
36 Workshop array
37 One not given the honor that's due
40 — and crafts
41 Debriefed person?
45 Great Lakes fish
47 Paul Newman film
49 Cruising
50 Elite alternative
51 Lennon's lady
52 Coed quarters
53 "So be it"
54 Dazzle
55 Crisp cookie

DOWN
1 Pear type
2 Hideaway
3 French 101 verb
4 Singer Houston
5 Steak choice
6 Epoch
7 MRI's kin
8 "A Room with —"
9 Crested parrot
10 Greek H
11 Cozy room
19 "You've got mail" co.
21 Dawn goddess
23 Chortle
24 Bar
25 Puts on
26 Beige
27 Arkin or Alda
28 Stir-fry condiment
32 Westminster Kennel Club event
33 Gizmos
35 Potent stick
36 Capote nickname
38 City-related
39 Fund
42 "The game —!"
43 Antitoxins
44 Pack (down)
45 Tax pro
46 That fellow
48 Family card game

Solution time: 25 mins.

			C	O	T			S	G	T		
		C	H	A	W		B	E	R	Y	L	
	B	L	A	R	E		U	T	O	P	I	A
	L	O	O	S	E	A	S	A	G	O	O	S	E
	T	D	S		T	O	T	E	S		T	S	K
			Y	E	N	S			A	T	C	E	
		M	A	U	D	E		A	N	N	A	S	
	F	I	R	M			B	R	U	T			
	A	C	T		S	H	E	E	R		B	A	A
	D	R	U	N	K	A	S	A	S	K	U	N	K
		O	R		E	N	T		E	L	E	N	A
			O	P	E	D	S		H	E	N	O	
			S	T	Y				Y	E	A		

Yesterday's answer 3-31



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jessica Szohr, 31; Ewan McGregor, 45; Christopher Walken, 73; Shirley Jones, 82.

Happy Birthday: A watchful eye will be necessary when dealing with your reputation, status and getting ahead. You'll face competition that will not play fair. Your precision and dedication will help you overcome anyone who tries to mess with you. Honor and glory will be your ticket to victory. Change is inevitable and preparation will be essential. Choose your battles wisely. Your numbers are 5, 13, 22, 24, 31, 37, 46.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Be careful not to push someone who is likely to push back. Be willing to work alongside your competition and you will gain respect. Let your discipline and energetic enthusiasm shine and you'll be hard to beat. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Be brave and express your thoughts and plans. Don't be afraid to try something new or to get involved in an unusual event or activity. The outcome will be enlightening and give you food for thought. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Helping someone out is fine, but if you loan out cash, it could ruin your friendship and leave you holding a bad debt. A secretive approach to something you want to develop will enable you to reach your goal without interference. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You'll be tempted to help someone who has a sob story. Back up and rethink your position. You will gain far more if you put your effort in to your own ideas rather than someone else's. Romance will enhance your personal life. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Check out the online job market and something will grab your attention and spark an idea that will enable you to advance. Finding ways to entertain your peers or employer will put you in the running for a cushy position. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Don't give in to personal conflict. Take care of business before you opt to have fun. Reassure those who put demands on you that you will take part when the time is right. Offering alternative incentives will lead to help, not hindrance. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't let emotional matters cloud your vision. Make a point to learn something that will help you move in a positive direction and improve your chances of getting ahead. A business partnership will lead to an interesting alternative. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): An old friend will play a role in a creative endeavor you want to pursue. Offering to help one another will pay off and make your quest for success much easier. Romance will enhance your day. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't leave anything unfinished or you will face complaints. Someone will be eager to make you look bad. Add to your comfort at home and make sure to take the time to enjoy your hobbies and friends. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't give in to someone's demands or pushiness. Stand your ground and make it clear what you believe is best for you. Put your thoughts on paper and draw up an agreement if necessary. Better to be safe than sorry. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Recognize and market your skills. What you have to offer can bring in extra cash and change the way people view you. Home improvements should be geared toward making a space conducive to getting a project up and running. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Know what you want, but go about getting it in a diplomatic manner. Being too forceful will invite arguments and opposition. Try to attract opportunity by offering incentives to the people you need help from. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are practical, impatient and secretive. You are opportunistic and bold.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			5		6			
	2						1	
		3	1		9	2		
3		4	8		7	5		1
1		5	3		2	6		7
		6	9		3	8		
	7						5	
			4		1			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/31

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

7	4	3	2	5	1	6	8	9
9	6	5	4	7	8	2	3	1
2	1	8	6	3	9	7	5	4
5	3	1	7	2	6	4	9	8
8	9	7	1	4	3	5	6	2
4	2	6	9	8	5	1	7	3
6	8	2	3	1	7	9	4	5
1	5	9	8	6	4	3	2	7
3	7	4	5	9	2	8	1	6

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/31

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

GREEK PAINTERS Solution: 9 letters

N	L	M	O	S	O	L	U	O	P	O	M	O	H	T
M	I	O	S	C	V	A	S	S	I	L	I	O	U	H
C	A	K	I	A	E	P	H	O	T	I	O	S	Y	E
S	H	N	O	Z	R	R	T	M	A	R	I	O	S	B
P	I	R	T	L	I	T	G	A	N	Ⓢ	Ⓣ	Ⓡ	Ⓐ	E
S	R	K	I	Z	A	D	Y	S	O	I	H	S	H	S
Y	A	O	A	S	A	O	E	L	I	Z	S	E	I	P
C	N	R	K	N	T	V	U	S	H	E	P	L	M	O
H	R	T	O	O	E	O	I	O	C	I	A	L	O	U
O	U	L	S	N	P	X	F	N	E	R	T	E	N	L
P	O	O	I	O	I	I	G	I	O	K	H	P	A	A
E	F	E	R	Y	K	S	O	M	S	S	I	A	S	K
D	R	Y	T	H	E	O	N	U	O	E	R	D	N	A
I	P	Y	A	N	N	I	S	T	A	V	R	O	U	S
S	O	K	S	A	R	A	P	A	N	A	E	N	U	S

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Andreou, Apelles, Aronis, Arts, Christofis, Echion, Fourna, Greco, Himonas, Kriezis, Loizides, Lytras, Mantzavinos, Marios, Moralis, Nikolaou, Panaenus, Paraskos, Photios, Poulakas, Prokopiou, Psychopedis, Samos, Spathi, Spyropoulos, Stavrou, Thebes, Theon, Thomopoulos, Tsokos, Vassiliou, Venieri, Xenakis, Yannis

Yesterday's Answer: Abs

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- Full time with flexible working hours
- Preferably can speak Japanese language fluently

(2) GENERAL MAINTENANCE
Salary: $ 6.05 per hour

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- Full time with flexible working hours

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- Full-time with flexible working hours

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or contact our Office at
Tel.: (670) 233-1545
between 2:30PM to 9:00PM.

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(2) WAITRESS
2-3 years experience as a waitress in a Night Bar or an Entertainment Business
Salary: $ 6.05 per hour

Other Qualifications:
- At least 21-25 years old with pleasing personality
- Full time with flexible working hours
- Preferably can speak Japanese language fluently

(2) GENERAL MAINTENANCE
Salary: $ 6.05 per hour

Qualifications:
- At least 2-3 years experience as a Commercial Building Maintenance. Preferably in Carpentry and Masonry
- Full time with flexible working hours

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(3) Housekeeper

(3) Mason

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US men's soccer fails to qualify in Olympics

AP

U.S. goalkeeper Ethan Horvath (1) deflects a Colombia free kick during the second half of an Olympic qualifying soccer match Tuesday, March 29, 2016, in Frisco, Texas. Colombia won, 2-1.

FRISCO, Texas (AP)—The United States failed to qualify for consecutive Olympic men's soccer tournaments for the first time in a half century, a collapse players found hard to address on analyze.

Roger Martinez scored twice, Americans Luis Gil and Matt Miazga were ejected and Colombia's under-23 team defeated the U.S. 2-1 Tuesday night to earn the last berth in the Rio de Janeiro Games with a 3-2 aggregate win in the two-leg, total-goals series.

Following a nightmare in Nashville four years ago, when the Americans were eliminated by El Salvador, they had a fiasco in Frisco.

"You dream about it since you were a little kid," forward Jordan Morris said, "so, it's a tough one to swallow."

Coach Andi Herzog said it wasn't the right time for him to dissect the Americans' poor performance.

"I'm real emotional, and I don't want to say anything without coming down a bit," Herzog said. "I'm really disappointed."

Martinez redirected Andres Roa's off-target shot past goalkeeper Ethan Horvath in the 30th minute. An own goal by Delver Machado tied the score in the 59th, with the defender heading the ball over his own keeper while trying to clear Morris' pass from Emerson Hyndman.

Martinez put the Colombians back ahead in the 64th minute, eluding Tim Parker at the 6-yard box and beating Horvath. At that point, because the first tiebreaker is away goals, the Americans needed to score twice.

"We give up such a simple, stupid goal," Herzog said.

The U.S. then showed its frustration. Gil, who scored in the first leg, entered in the 67th minute and was given a yellow card by Uzbek referee Ravshan Irmatov in the 77th for fouling Wilmer Barrios near midfield. Gil dissented and was shown a red.

Miazga received a red in the 90th minute for fouling Christian Borga just outside the penalty area on a clear goal-scoring opportunity.

The U.S. had last failed to qualify for consecutive Olympics from 1960-68. Colombia will make its first appearance since 1992.

U.S. national team coach Jurgen Klinsmann said the 2012 group of under-23 players was set back by its failure to play at the London Olympics and he made qualifying for Brazil a priority, installing top assistant Herzog as under-23 coach.

But the Americans were forced into the playoff by losing to Honduras 2-0 last October in the semifinal round of the regional qualifying in North and Central America and the Caribbean.

Before a crowd of 7,998, the Americans were outshot 11-5, including 6-0 in shots on target, increasing Colombia's advantage to 29-10 and 12-1 over the two legs.

Herzog made two changes to his starting lineup, inserting midfielder Paul Arriola in place of Gil and for Desevio Payne started instead of Eric Miller.

Horvath was back in goal. He left the first leg late in the first half after colliding with Colombia's Andres Renteria just outside the penalty area.

The Americans' defeat prevented a sweep for the U.S. men's program Tuesday. The national team beat Guatemala 4-0 in a World Cup qualifier at Columbus, Ohio.

This game resembled the loss to Honduras. The Americans were outmuscled once again.

"When a team played real physical against us, we didn't have any power, any assertiveness up front," Herzog said. "That's disappointing."

Dempsey sparks U.S. crucial win in World Cup qualifier

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—American soccer fans fretted for four days: If the United States lost to Guatemala once again, the U.S. would have little chance to qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

Their worries quickly vanished Tuesday night.

Clint Dempsey scored 12 minutes in, Geoff Cameron, Graham Zusi and Jozy Altidore added goals and the U.S. routed Guatemala 4-0 to get back on track.

"I thought we showed a lot of heart," Dempsey said. "We showed a lot of character by dealing with a pressure situation."

Following a dismal 2-0 loss at Guatemala City on Friday night in which Jurgen Klinsmann deployed several players out of their most comfortable positions, the U.S. coach made five lineup changes and shifted two others into their more usual spots. The Americans responded and improved to 27-0-2 at home in qualifying since 2001, including 7-0-2 at Mapfre Stadium.

"Columbus has bailed us out on several occasions," U.S. captain Michael Bradley said.

Cameron doubled the lead in the 35th and Zusi, added to the roster on Sunday, made it 3-0 just 18 seconds into the second half. Jozy Altidore capped the scoring in the 89th.

"The attitude tonight was outstanding," Klinsmann said. "We were in sync with the wonderful crowd that pushed them from the first second. There was wonderful energy."

Trinidad and Tobago (3-0-1) won 6-0 at home against St. Vincent and the Grenadines and leads Group C with 10 points, three ahead of the U.S. (2-1-1). Guatemala (2-2) has six points, and St. Vincent (0-4) has been eliminated.

Seeking its eighth straight World Cup berth, the U.S. travels to St. Vincent on Sept. 2, then finishes the round four days later against Trinidad at Jacksonville, Florida.

"We showed our pride," Dempsey said. "You've got to do that if want to make it to the World Cup. You've got to show that you want it, and we showed that we wanted it."

Dempsey scored his 49th international goal, eight behind Landon Donovan's American record, after Cameron looped a pass just inside the center circle to just inside the penalty area. A streaking Gyasi Zardes, flanked by Moises Hernandez and Rafael Morales, used the side of his head to knock the ball down. Dempsey ran onto the ball after two bounces and first-timed a 14-yard right-footed shot past goalkeeper Paulo Motta.

Dempsey has six goals in 10 games against Guatemala and a U.S.-record 14 in World Cup qualifying, one more than Donovan.

Cameron doubled the lead after Bobby Wood was fouled by Cristian Jimenez, Bradley took the free kick, and Cameron got in front of Carlos Castrillo for an 8-yard header, his fourth international goal.

At the start of the second half, Yedlin played the ball to Zardes, who allowed it to bounce off him. Zusi ran in and got off a quick shot for his fourth U.S. goal, his first since October 2013 in a qualifier at Panama. A giveway by Rodrigo Saravia of the hometown Columbus Crew led to Dempsey feeding Altidore for his 34th U.S. goal.

Klinsmann shifted Cameron to central defense from right back and moved DeAndre Yedlin to right back from midfield. Defender Steve Birnbaum, midfielders Kyle Beckerman and Zusi, and Zardes were inserted into the lineup along with goalkeeper Brad Guzan, who had been scheduled to rotate with Tim Howard. Dropped were the central defense pairing of Omar Gonzalez and Michael Orozco, and midfielders Mix Diskerud and Alejandro Bedoya, who has a sore ankle.

"Every team needs leadership from its veteran players," Klinsmann said.

Midfielder Christian Pulisic, also added to the roster Sunday, made his national team debut in the 81st minute. At 17 years, 193 days, Pulisic became the youngest American in a qualifier. By appearing in the game, Pulisic became ineligible to play for Croatia, the nation of his grandfather.

"It's exactly what I expected; very, very physical," he said. "It was a good game. It gives me confidence. I'm going to try and stay grounded and keep doing what I'm doing and become the best player I can."

In other results, Andres Guardado and Jesus Corona scored first-half goals and Mexico beat Canada 2-0 Tuesday night in a World Cup qualifier to become the first nation to clinch a berth in the six-nation final round of the North and Central American and Caribbean region.

Guardado scored on a penalty kick in the 17th and Corona in the 45th.

Seeking its seventh straight World Cup berth, Mexico (4-0) leads Group A with 12 points, followed by Canada and Honduras (both 1-2-1) and El Salvador (0-2-2).

"We*re very happy we are having a healthy qualifying round so far," said Mexico coach Juan Carlos Osorio, who made five changes to his starting lineup. "Today it was a chance to see some of the younger players. We are trying to improve our chances to achieve major goals."

Mexico plays at El Salvador on Sept. 2, when Honduras hosts Canada. The round ends four days later, when Canada is home against El Salvador and Mexico hosts Honduras.

Canada last played in the World Cup in 1986.

"I've said it before, that a win is not necessarily a victory in a match but to have the intention to do it. From the first second in Vancouver until the last one in Mexico City we did it," Canadian coach Benito Floro said. "Unfortunately we are playing in ha group with a rival that it*s above all. Now there will be a fight between three for one spot".

Warriors move one win closer to season record

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Steve Kerr and his do-everything superstar, Stephen Curry, expected Golden State to build on its championship run of last season.

This record, though? No way.

And 60 games over .500 at this stage? Yeah, right.

Curry knocked down six more 3-pointers to increase his record total on the way to 26 points, and Warriors beat the Washington Wizards 102-94 on Tuesday night to stay on track for the all-time wins record.

Klay Thompson followed back-to-back 40-point games with 16 as Golden State (67-7) stayed a game ahead of the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls' pace during their 72-10 season. The Warriors matched their win total of last season and must go 6-2 over the final eight games to have the record all to themselves.

Kerr thought "maybe our record would get a little worse" as defending champs.

"I was under the same impression that our record might not be indicative of the progress we might have made over the course of the season. And not to get discouraged if we couldn't match what we did last year knowing that the ultimate goal is to win a championship," Curry said.

"As you go through the season and kind of get lost in the journey, we should be able to accomplish both: be a better team and better our record, which we're on our way to doing. For us to be playing at such a high level for two straight years and have our eyes set on the ultimate goal, it's fun."

Draymond Green had 15 points, 16 rebounds and nine assists to just miss back-to-back triple-doubles in the Warriors' 54th straight regular-season home win and 36th consecutive this season.

Bradley Beal scored 17 for the Wizards, who lost their fourth straight to Golden State.

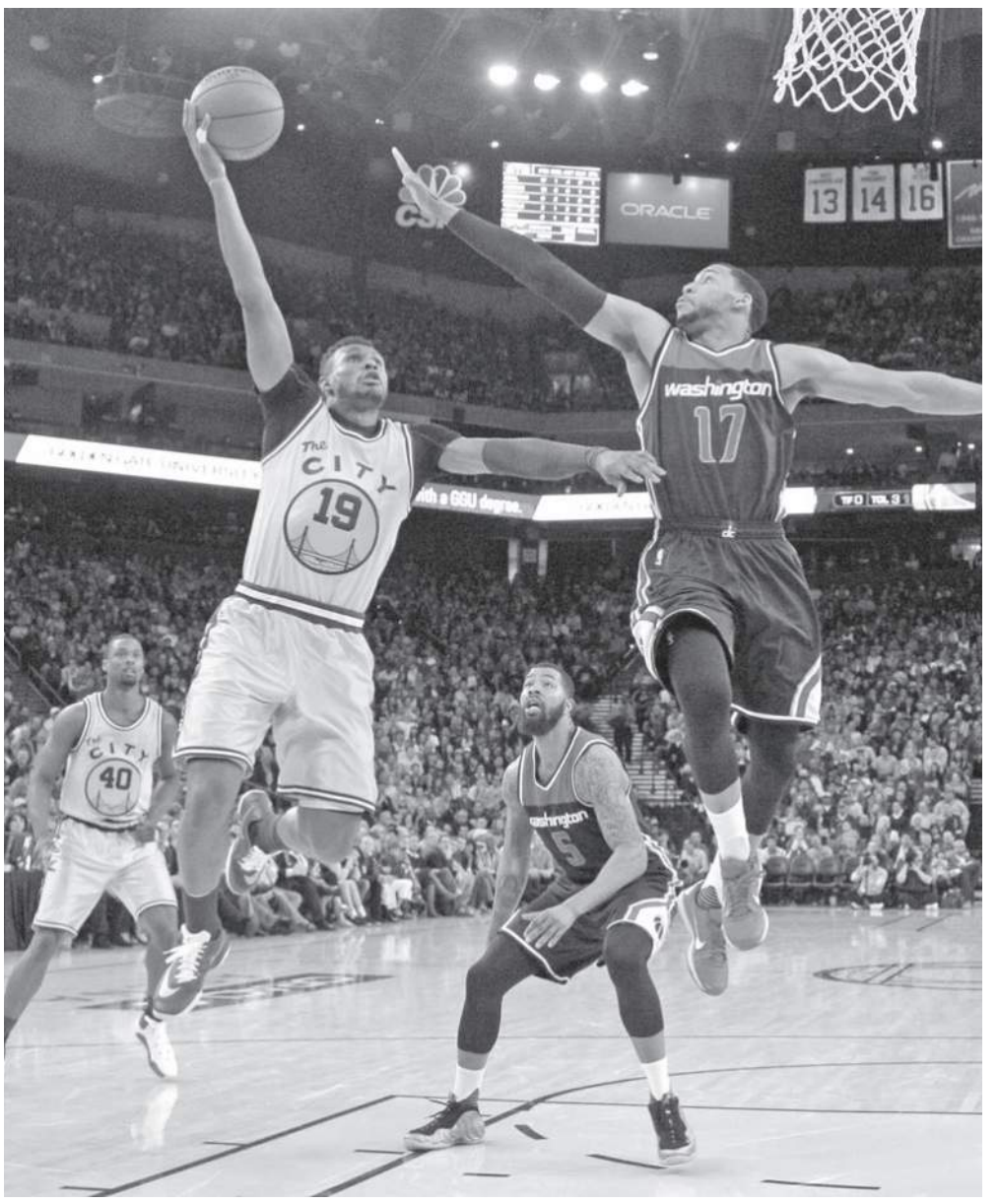
Curry, who scored 51 points with a career-high and franchise record-tying 11 3s in the first meeting Feb. 3, shot 9 for 20 overall and 6 of 8 from long range. He added seven rebounds, seven assists and five steals.

Curry (356) and Thompson (255) already had the most combined 3-pointers by a pair of teammates in a season. Reigning MVP Curry, the first player in NBA history with 300 3s in a season, has eight games left to chase 400. Thompson is aiming to top Curry's previous record of 286 3s.

Washington was content to keep pace on both ends with the Warriors and took advantage of Golden State's sloppy execution on the offensive end. Curry missed an open layup after going around Marcin Gortat and Thompson was called for traveling driving to the basket soon after with his team down by nine.

But the Warriors finished the first half on a 12-0 run for a 49-46 lead at the break.

"Against a team like this that's fighting for history, 12-0 at the end of a half when you're up nine hurts," Wizards coach Randy Wittman said.



AP

Golden State Warriors' Leandro Barbosa (19) drives to the basket as Washington Wizards' Garrett Temple (17) defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, March 29, 2016, in Oakland, Calif. Golden State won, 102-94.

Rockets 106, Cavaliers 100

In Cleveland, James Harden scored 27 points and Houston rallied from a 20-point deficit to beat Cleveland, which rested LeBron James.

Harden scored 18 points in the fourth quarter and Houston outscored Cleveland 35-16 in the period.

Dwight Howard's free throw with 2:13 left put Houston ahead 95-94. Harden's 3-pointer made it 98-94 before Kyrie Irving hit a 3-pointer with 1:30 left, making it a one-point game.

Both teams missed shots on their next possession, but Trevor Ariza's 3-pointer from the corner with 17 seconds left gave Houston a 101-97 lead.

Irving scored 31 points for Cleveland, which fell to 1/3 this season and 4-13 over the last two when James doesn't play.

Bulls 98, Pacers 96

In Indianapolis, Jimmy Butler made a tiebreaking jumper with 3.7 seconds left, and Chicago beat Indiana to snap a four-game losing streak.

Nikola Mirotic scored 28 points as Chicago (37-37) got back to .500 and pulled within two games of Indiana for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Mirotic made seven 3-pointers, his final one tying it at 96 with 2:19 remaining.

The Pacers missed five shots in the final 2 minutes that would have given them the lead before the Bulls rebounded Pau Gasol's miss with 20 seconds remaining and got the ball to Butler for his 17-footer from the right wing.

CJ Miles missed a 3-pointer that would have won it as time expired. Paul George had 20 points and nine rebounds for the Pacers, while Ian Mahinmi had 18 points and seven boards.

Butler finished with 14 points, and Gasol added 10 points and 11 rebounds.

Pistons 88, Thunder 82

In Auburn Hills, Marcus Morris scored 24 points, and Detroit took advantage of Kevin Durant's absence in a victory over Oklahoma City.

The Thunder rested Durant and Serge Ibaka, and Oklahoma City was held to only nine points in the third period en route to its lowest-scoring game of the season. The Thunder rallied from a 15-point deficit, closing the gap to just one in the fourth, but Detroit was able to hold on late for another victory in its push for a playoff spot.

The Thunder had their eight-game winning streak snapped. Russell Westbrook led Oklahoma City with 24 points on 8-of-28 shooting.

Andre Drummond had 13 points and 15 rebounds for the Pistons, and Tobias Harris added 17 points.

Hornets 100, Sixers 85

In Philadelphia, Nicolas Batum had 19 points, 12 rebounds and 12 assists for his second triple-double of the season, leading Charlotte over Philadelphia.

Cody Zeller added 18 points and 11 boards for Charlotte, which set a franchise record for wins in a month with its 13th victory in March.

The Hornets, who entered the game in sixth place in the Eastern Conference, also inched closer to clinching their first playoff spot in two years and just second postseason berth in the last 13 years. Charlotte hasn't won a playoff series, though, since 2002.

The teams both have off until Friday, when they will play again in Charlotte for the fourth and final meeting of the season.

Short-handed Philadelphia, which dressed just 10 players, lost its 10th straight game and 23rd in the last 24. Robert Covington had 18 points.

Magic 139, Nets 105

In Orlando, Aaron Gordon had 20 points and Elfrid Payton had 11 points and 12 assists as the Magic scored a season high in defeating Brooklyn.

Victor Oladipo and Evan Fournier had their moments and backup center Dewayne Dedmon, playing in place of injured Nikola Vucevic, scored 15 points

The Magic had eight players in double figures, including backups Andrew Nicholson with 24 and Jason Smith with 14.

The Nets were led by reserve forward Thomas Robinson, who scored 18 points, after being inserted into the starting lineup in place of Thaddeus Young. Brook Lopez scored just five points in the first half and did not play in the second half.

NFL demands retraction of *New York Times* concussion story

NEW YORK (AP)—The NFL has demanded The New York Times retract a story that called the league's concussion research flawed and likened the NFL's handling of head trauma to the tobacco industry's response to the dangers of cigarettes.

In a letter from its law firm to the general counsels of the newspaper and obtained by The Associated Press on Tuesday, the league said it was defamed by the Times. The NFL added the story published last Thursday did not "present a shred of evidence to support its thesis that the NFL intentionally concealed concussion research data."

The NFL also said it will "more broadly reserve all of the league's rights and remedies," a veiled threat of legal action.

Times sports editor Jason Stallman said, "We see no reason to retract anything."

"The NFL apparently objects to our reporting that the league had ties to the tobacco industry," Stallman added. "But, as the article noted, a co-owner of the Giants, Preston R. Tisch, also partly owned a leading cigarette company, Lorillard, and was a board member of both the Tobacco Institute and the Council for Tobacco Research, two entities that played a central role in misusing science to hide the risks of cigarettes. Also, the NFL and the tobacco industry shared lobbyists, lawyers and consultants."

In its letter, signed by league attorney Brad Karp, the NFL said not only that the story did not establish any meaningful ties to the tobacco industry, but that the headline was false and incendiary, and that a graphic attached to the story was misleading.

An NFL search of 14 million documents from the tobacco litigation archives found "significant connections" between the Times and the tobacco industry, the letter said, calling those connections "far more concrete than the phantom connections contrived by the Times purporting to tie the NFL to the tobacco industry."

The Times story—its lead item on the front page—revealed that some concussions that occurred in the NFL were omitted from the league's studies, despite NFL claims to the contrary.

"The league has always maintained that the studies were based on a data set that included every concussion that was diagnosed by a team doctor," Stallman said. "In fact, our reporting showed that more than 100 such concussions—including some sustained by star players—were not included in the data set, resulting in inaccurate findings. "

But the NFL's letter stresses that the fact the studies relied on data that were not a complete count of all concussions in the league was "repeatedly and expressly disclosed in the studies themselves." It also accuses the Times of implying to its readers that the newspaper uncovered "a secret and nefarious plot by the league to suppress relevant data and manipulate the test results in a manner learned through the league's 'ties' to Big Tobacco ..."

The NFL said the research the Times focused on forms no part of the current work by the league's head, neck and spine committee.

Team Victoria goes for title defense in Mahi Derby 2016

Defending champion *Team Victoria* is hoping to catch the biggest fish this Saturday in the Annual Mahi Derby 2016.

Captain Diego Benavente and crewmembers Scott Shular, James Benavente, and Vicky Benavente will be registering their boat to compete in the weekend tournament.

"We're getting ready, preparing the lures and gear for this weekend," said captain Benavente. "There's no guarantee when it comes to fishing, so we're just going to get out there, do our best, and keep an eye out for the big one."

The Saipan Fishermen's Association (SFA) will begin registration for all boat captains tomorow at the Smiling Cove Marina, from 4:30pm to 6:30pm. The Mahi Derby officially starts at 6am and concludes at 5pm on Saturday. SFA president Gene Weaver emphasizes the importance of safety and preparation for all Derby participants.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Scott Shular of *Team Victoria* shows the mahi caught last weekend in the waters between Saipan and Tinian.

"It's the number one factor when we organize the annual Mahi Derby," Weaver said. SFA encourages all participants to have their boats inspected by the Department of Public Safety's Boating Safety Unit. For more information, contact the Boating Safety office to arrange for an appointment. DPS Boating Safety telephone numbers are 285-4829 (Officer Kaipat), 285-5914 (Officer Omar) and 287-9610 (Officer Sato).

Last year, SFA signed up 37 boats to compete for cash and in-kind prizes and bragging rights for one year. Coming in first place, *Team Victoria*, caught the biggest mahi weighing 24.4lbs, garnering the captain and crew $1,000 in cash. Last year's second place winner, Captain Alexandro Castro of the *Carmelita*, came in with a 23.8-lb-catch, and in third place, was the *Zeppelin*, with Captain Steve Pixley.

Sponsors for the 2016 Mahi Derby include the SFA, Budweiser, Marianas Visitors Authority, Docomo Pacific, and the CNMI Dept. Public Safety Boating Safety.

Derby entry forms and rules are available at the MVA office in Oleai, and the Fishing Tackle in Susupe. For more information, contact Martin Duenas at the MVA at 664-3200 or log on to the SFA website at www.sfacnmi.com. ***(PR)***

HANMI golf tourney set for June 18

One of the most highly anticipated annual golf tournaments in the Northern Mariana Islands is set to tee off on June 18 as the 15th Annual HANMI Charity Golf Classic Tournament prepares to offer golfers the chance to win enticing prizes.

This year's tournament will again be held at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort and will be open to the first 144 paid registrants. Cash and numerous in-kind prizes await the winners, and proceeds of the tournament will be contributed to community charities.

"We're bringing back the Blackjack Double Peoria format that was so popular last year, as well as the Championship flight. Golfers will again be able to request their preferred pairing, and registration fees will remain the same as last year," said tournament chairman Paul Park of LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort, "We encourage all golfers to mark their calendars for the 15th HANMI Charity Golf Classic Tournament on June 18. It's going to be great."

Registration forms will be available shortly on the HANMI website at www.saipanhotels.org, and at Mariana Country Club, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Hyatt Regency Saipan, and LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort. Early bird tournament fee is $110 for payments received by 3pm, June 15. The fee includes green fee and the awards banquet. The fee increases to $130 after the early bird deadline. For an additional $30, players may also compete for optional play prizes. The tournament will start at 7am.

Tournament prizes will be announced shortly. ***(PR)***

King and Queen of the Beach set for Sunday

The sands of Hyatt Regency Saipan beachside will turn into a royal battleground this Sunday as volleyball players team up to see who has the skills to be crowned King and Queen of the Beach.

Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association has partnered with Stellar Marianas, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Landshark Lager, Aloha Maid, Caravan Restaurant, and Marianas Variety, to bring the initiative of 2015 Miss Marianas Jian Joyner back to the court and help raise some funds at the same time.

The 2016 King and Queen of the Beach is a two-player male or female teams for 16 years old and up players with competition based on individual wins.

"We had done this before a while ago and we are excited to bring it back as an event," said NMIVA president Laurie Peterka.

The players will rotate and based on the number of individual wins, participants will be crowned King and Queen of the Beach. The $25 per person registration includes a special edition King and Queen of the Beach t-shirt and delicious lunch from Caravan Restaurant.

Winners will walk away with a crown, sash, flowers, beach chair thrones, gifts from Landshark, an island style lager, and Aloha Maid as well as gift certificates from Hyatt Regency Saipan.

"I wanted to create a fun way to raise funds through the love of volleyball and I am very grateful for all our community partners and players coming together to make it possible," Joyner said.

"We are inviting our community to come and enjoy the day watching the tournament and supporting NMIVA and Stellar Marianas. Registration is on site at 8:30am, so if you would like to play, come and register," she added

Information is available on the King and Queen of the Beach Facebook page as well as on NMIVA and Stellar Marianas Facebook pages. ***(PR)***

BIG

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singles for the promising 9-0 advantage.

The Falcons' lead ballooned to as high as 10, 12-2, as they still outgunned the Red Sox in the next three and a half innings. Neldreyton Skerei and Angailen made RBI singles in the fifth and sixth inning, while the Falcons' other run in the sixth was recorded off another Red Sox's defensive lapse. The Red Sox's two runs, on the other hand, were posted at the bottom of the third off Delin Reusora's RBI triple and the Falcons' error at shortstop.

Down by double digits, the Falcons tried to recover at the bottom of the sixth after collecting six runs. Reusora blasted another RBI triple to spark the rally, while Alvin Pua, Tindin Leon Guerrero, Christian Lizama, Carter Borja, and Andres Camacho each posted an RBI single to threaten the Falcons.

However, the Falcons won't be denied of the win, as they played tough defense in the last inning to foil the Red Sox's comeback bid. The Red Sox were done quickly at the bottom of the seventh and last inning as Lizama—the leadoff batter—went down on a 6-3 putout play and the next two—Camacho and L.J Fleming were booted out on a double play.

JUNIOR LEAGUE
Enforcers 5, Braves 3

The Kagman Enforcers prevailed in a low-scoring game against the Braves.

The Enforcers shut down the Braves in the first six innings and then withstood their foes' rally in the last to escape with the close win.

J.P. Celis pitched a complete game, allowing no hits in the first six innings and walking just two and striking out four before giving up two singles in the seventh inning. Celis' teammates helped him silence the Braves in the majority of the match after scrambling for fly balls.

While the Braves were cold in the first six innings, the Enforcers managed to get an RBI single from Pedro Maratita in the third inning, a two-RBI double from Prestley Augustino and one run from Dennis Cabrera from a wild pitch in the fifth, and another run from Chris Achas off a passed ball to take a 5-0 advantage, going into the last inning.

In the final inning, the Braves mounted a comeback as Joe Tudela reached off the Enforcers' error at third base, Lavec Iguel hit an RBI single, and Chris Alepuyo made it home off a wild pitch. The Braves scored the three runs with two outs and Iguel at third base, however he was left stranded and the Enforcers saved the lead and the win after Josenio Alvarez flied out at centerfield.

PBT

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he could have won his age group," said Kimura.

Sugie finished second behind Saipan Swim Club's Caleb Wang after getting 63 points against the latter's 66.

Ashley won the girls 9 to 10 age group, beating seven other swimmers. She bagged six PBTs out of her nine events. Her brother, Aasish, also ruled his age group (U8) and had five PBTs in seven events. Gauran and Aika Watanabe, on the other hand, combined for 11 PBTs in the girls 11 to 12 age group with the former marking five PBTs in nine events and the latter tallying 6.

In the boys 11 to 12, Batallones nearly had a clean mark, going 8-for-9, while Tenorio posted seven PBTs in nine events. In the 13 to 14 age group, Illahi, Maestro, and Tammy had low PBT ratios, but they still got recognition from Kimura after making it to the Top 3 in their age group.

"Overall, I believe we did our best in the international meet. Our swimmers were affected by Typhoon Soudelor and some of our members quit swimming due to various reasons. However, we still train, work hard, and remain competitive. We will work harder in the next meet," Kimura said.

Meanwhile, Kouki Watanabe got a slot on the Tsunami Saipan team that will compete in Guam in May after posting a BB time in the boys U8's 50m breaststroke (1:00.86)

KAGMAN

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break the game wide open. Roke Tenorio capped the Ayuyus' scoring spree with a triple at the buzzer, lifting his team to a commanding 59-32 advantage, entering the final canto. Tenorio's trey was Kagman's third in that quarter with Mike Muna and Darion Jones knocking in one apiece, while Aaron Ogumoro scored 6 of his 9 points in the telling period.

Ogumoro ended up top-scoring for Kagman with his 9 markers and although no Ayuyus player broke into double figures, their balance offense was enough to romp them past the misfiring Tinian crew. Jones and Jeff Castro added 8 each, Tenorio and Dizon Magofna contributed 7 apiece, while five of their teammates combined for 25 markers.

Dboy Cruz paced Tinian with his 10 points, but was held to one field goal in the second-half meltdown. Garreth Jumao chipped in 9, but also struggled in the second half, while Paka Sablan and Juanis King registered 7 apiece, failing to hit baskets in streaks.

Tinian played catch up all though out the match after canning only one field goal in the first period off Romeo Omar's layup. Paka Sablan scored the Stallions' three other points from the charities, while Kagman drew baskets from seven different players to establish the 12-point advantage. The Ayuyus kept the safe distance at the break, as they continued to get contributions from every player they fielded in the game and then broke Tinian's back late in the third.

Kagman 67— Ogumoro 9, Jones 8, Castro 8, Tenorio 7, Magofna 7, Palino 6, Lizama 6, Muna 5, Jepen 4, Islam 4, Torres 3, Arceo 2.

Tinian 44 —Cruz 10, Jumao 9, P. Sablan 7, King 7, San Nicolas 6, Omar 3, Epity 2.

Scoring by quarters: 17-5, 33-22, 59-32, 67-44.

2016 Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Tinian High School player fakes off the defense of an Agape Christian School player during their game in the boys division of the 2016 Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Saipan Southern High School 1's Djay Ong tries to dribble past a Saipan Southern High School 2 defender.

Saipan Southern High School 2's Jester Kintaro, left, beats two Saipan Southern High School 1 players for the rebound.

An Agape Christian School player pulls up for a shot against Marianas High School's Antonio Santos.

Marianas High School's Jude Tengco, left, drives against an Agape Christian School defender.

A Mt. Carmel School player, right, gets away from the defense of Saipan Southern High School 1's Art Borromeo.

A Mt. Carmel School player stretches for a layup.

Tinian High School and Agape Christian School players fight for the rebound.

A Tinian High School player pops for a short jumper against an Agape Christian School defender.

US men's soccer fails to qualify in Olympics

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Kagman routs Tinian in finale

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Kagman High School's Jeff Castro drives against two Tinian High School defenders, while teammate Roke Tenorio steps into the play during the second quarter of their title game in the Settsu-Saipan caging last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Kagman High School took the championship in the boys division of the 2016 Settsu-Saipan Friendship Basketball Tournament after whipping Tinian High School in the winner-take-all finale, 67-44, last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Ayuyus had a strong start in the finals and went for the kill in the third period to take the easy win and top the division that also featured two teams each from Marianas High School, Saipan Southern High School and one apiece from Agape Christian School and Mt. Carmel School.

The Ayuyus led by double digits at the end of the first and second quarters, 17-5, and 33-32, and then broke away in the third, 59-32, as fatigue caught up with Tinian and the visiting teams fired up blanks in the penultimate frame.

Tinian, which along with Kagman had little time to recover in the finals after beating MHS 1 and SSHS 1, respectively, in the semis games on the same day, was still facing a manageable deficit, 28-36, when the Ayuyus' guns went blazing in the pivotal third.

Kagman outgunned the Stallions, 23-4, in the last five minutes of the third period to

See KAGMAN on Page

Big second inning lifts Falcons over Red Sox

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Falcons scored nine runs in the second inning en route to a 12-8 victory against the Red Sox in the Senior League game in the 2016 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

The Falcons got the nine runs at the top of the second after a 1-2-3 inning in the first. The Red Sox also failed to score in first inning as Falcons starting pitcher Richard Atalig got back-to-back strikeouts and the former were called for the third out off a 6-3 putout play, leaving third batter Chabo Leon Guerrero stranded at second.

The Red Sox then committed one error after another at the top of the second, allowing the Falcons to claim five runs, while the latter's four remaining runs were earned ones. Atalig had a two-RBI triple, while Kimo Angailen and Kekuni Kaainoa hit RBI

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Falcons pitcher eyes his target during their Senior League game against the Red Sox in the 2016 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

PBT rush for 8 Tsunami Saipan swimmers

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Eight Tsunami Saipan swimmers marked personal best times in all their events in the 2016 Saipan Swim Club International Invitational Meet held from March 17 to 19 at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

Seven-year-old Maria Batallones led Tsunami Saipan swimmers with 100 percent PBTs in seven events. Others on the list were Isaiah Aleksenko (9-for-9), Sean Gil (8-for-8), Asaka (8-for-8) and Shoko Litulumar (7-for-7), Ayumi Obligacion (7-for-7), Arman Rechucher (8-for-8), and Risa Sekiguchi (5-for-5).

Batallones and Isaiah also finished second in the high-point race in the girls U8 and boys 9 to 10 division, respectively, earning good remarks from Tsunami Saipan head coach Hiro Kimura. The mentor said Maria is just 7 years old and Isaiah is 9, but both did well against much older opponents and he believes they will fare better in the succeeding competitions.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tsunami Saipan swimmers pose with their medals and plaques before starting their training session at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool early this week.

Besides the Tsunami Saipan swimmers who recorded 100 percent PBTs, Kimura also recognized the performance of Ashley and Aasish Dangol, Sophia Gauran, Aika Watanabe, Nelson Batallones, Juhn Tenorio, Miku Tammy, Kathrine Illahi, Mark Maestro, Angel De Jesus, and Takumi Sugie.

Sugie swam in only seven events and earned five PBTs.

"If he did nine events,

See PBT on Page 26